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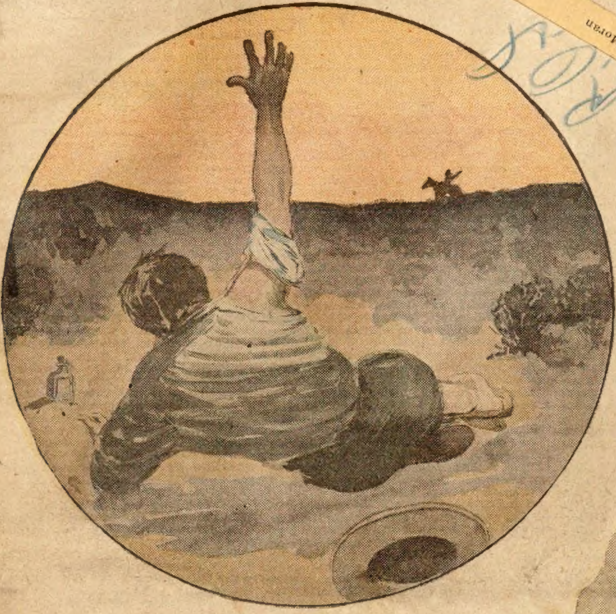

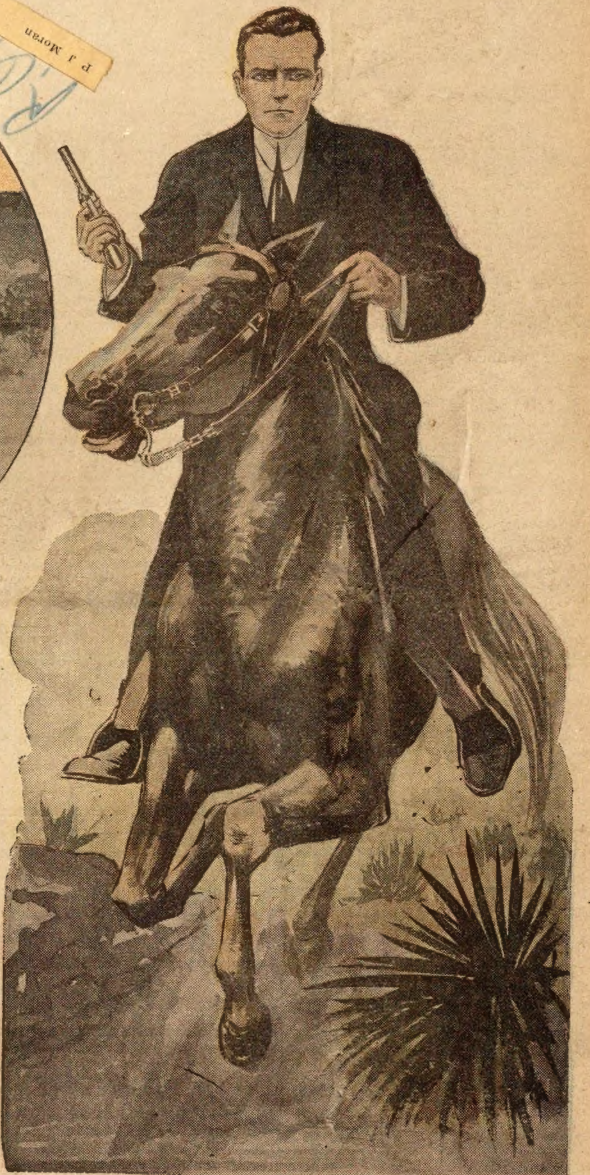

OUT WEST STORIES

King Bill of the Catalinas

By Hapsburg Liebe

"HAVE you any bad men in this section?"

Old Webster Callahan, justice of the peace and the oldest inhabitant of Fireplace, took his gaze from the barren summit of one of the Catalina peaks, and turned it upon the smooth face of the young Easterner who had put the question. Then he crossed his feet on the veranda railing and said:

"Somehow the way you asked me that reminds me o' the way another young fellow from the East asked me the same thing fifteen years ago. No—we don't have real bad men any more. They have gone the way of the buffalo and the Indian. We never did have as many outlaws as we was credited with havin', anyhow. As to that young fellow who asked me that same question fifteen years ago, there's a story connected. Want to hear it? You do! Settle back and light up. It's comin'——"

"At that time I was operatin' a stagecoach between the railroad and a little minin' camp called Yellow Creek, which was at the lower end o' the Catalinas yonder, and on the edge o' the desert. I hardly ever had a full load of passengers, and on this particular trip I had but one. He climbed up on the seat with me. He was a slim little fellow, pink of cheek and blue of eye; his gray clothin' was fine and cut to fit, and he had one o' them there little go-to-hell college hats on his head. He was mighty quiet until we'd got well away from the railroad, and then he opens up sudden with this:

"'Have you any bad men in this section?'

"'We've got one,' says I, which was the truth. 'His name's Bill King; but we've took to callin' him King Bill on account o' his ways. Big man, he is, with a King of England beard and bearin'; perfect shot; has never killed anybody, but has lots o' holdups to his discredit. And,' I adds, 'he's got a notch in the upper part o' each ear to prove that he's been shot at pretty hard.'

"'A notch in each ear!' cries the boy, settin' up as straight as a prairie dog. 'By Henry, the first crack!'

"'What's that?' says I.

"'I said,' answers the kid, 'words meanin' that I'd found him the first thing.' And a glance at him shows me that his blue eyes is all fire, and that all o' the pink is gone out o' his cheeks.

"'Might I inquire where you're from, stranger?' I says.

"'N-Yawk,' says he. And when I looks like I don't exactly get him, he goes on fractious: 'New-w-w Yaurk—is that plain enough?'

"'Yes,' I answers. 'But as for the plainness of the rest, it ain't. I don't somehow connect. Know Bill King?'

"'No; but I will.' And with that he takes a little nickel-plated gun from the suitcase at his feet, and transfers it to a handy coat pocket. When I seen that pistol, I was too tickled to laugh—honest. The boy goes on, with his voice hard: 'How does it come that the officers have never arrested Bill King?'

"'It's simple,' says I.

"'What's simple?'

"'They can't catch him.'

"The boy turns up his nose. 'Stuff! Stuff!' says he. 'But I'm glad they haven't caught him. I want him myself. And jot this down in your little memoranda—I'll get him.'

"'Look here,' says I, 'you take a blamed fool's advice, and forget it—I mean forget your crazy determination to rope in Bill King. Why, you little tadpole, you couldn't wake Bill King if you was to find him asleep!'

"The boy turns on me hot. It seemed like his madness was about to choke him. 'Listen here,' says he. 'I had a big brother who come to this country a few years ago to hunt for gold. He was a good brother. He was the best brother any man ever had. This Bill King killed him—robbed him, and then killed him! I—I've talked too much. I see. But I've got to have a friend here, and it might as well be you as anybody else. Promise me on your word that you'll keep things to yourself until it's all over, and I'll tell you the rest.'

"My curiosity was well out o' banks by now. I promised on my word of honor.

"'The reason I want to keep it a secret is,' he continues, 'because I want to kill Bill King myself. If the fact that I'm after King gets up a stir, the law is likely to make a new effort to get King. I've got more against him than the law has. See? Well, here's the rest. A cowman, a few months ago, found a skeleton on a desert, and close by it a small bottle with a letter in it. The letter was to me. The cowman very kindly put it in an envelope and mailed it. Here's the letter. Read it.'

"'If you can drive a minute,' says I; and he takes over the lines in his pink-and-white hands.

"The sheet o' paper was yellow and soiled. But I could make out in a clear, bold handwritin' in pencil this:

"'Mr. Robert Selford,
"'1441 Prayther St., New York.

"'Dear Brother:

"'I am writing this in the hope that some merciful soul will find it and mail it to you. I am miles from anywhere, and within an hour I'll be gone. A brute of an outlaw robbed me of all the gold I had found in eight months; and when I followed him out into the desert to try to recover it, he turned upon me, and we had a long fight. He got me at last. Through the lung. But he didn't get me before I'd notched each ear for him with bullets. I tell you this because I want you to know that I went down like a Selford and like a man. And now, little brother, Heaven bless you, and good-by.

"'THORNTON SELFORD.'

"'The cowman buried the skeleton,' says the boy, almost sobbin', as I handed him the faded letter and took the lines. He goes on: 'The cowman's name was Lute Ardmore; he works on the Crossed L Ranch.'

"'The Crossed L is about two hundred miles to the west of here,' says I.

"'I'll find Ardmore, and thank him, before I go back,' says he. 'You was mistaken in your idee that Bill King had no blood on his hands.'

"'It's clear,' I says. 'Get him, son, if you can. But let me offer some good advice—you throw away that little popgun of yours into some kindly bunch o' scrub, and get a real, man-sized gun.'

"'No,' objects Robert Selford. 'You see, I've been practicing with this for a month, and I'm used to it. I can hit a dinnerplate at fifteen yards, every crack.'

"'Poor boy! You can do that,' says I, 'by takin' a good aim and holdin' the popgun in both hands. But Bill King,' says I, 'can put six bullets into one bullet hole at fifteen yards, without aimin' at all.'

"'Stuff! Stuff!' exclaims young Selford, not a bit convinced. He takes his little pistol from his coat pocket, and gives it a caress such as few things but the firstborn of woman ever know. 'This boy,' says he, mighty proud, 'throws its bullets sideways, and they'll cut a hole in a man big enough to hide dog in.'

"Well, in them days there was in Yellow Creek a saloon and hotel combined under the headin', 'The Dew Drop Inn.' It was run by a fat, bald-pated man named Elversett; and it had the faithful patronage of over a hundred miners and cowmen—at least, the saloon half did. Robert Selford got a room in the hotel half. After he'd had his supper, he walks into the saloon, which was crowded, as usual. He goes here and there among the little poker tables, lookin' for a man he don't find, a man with each ear notched.

"Of course he drawed attention. A big miner by the name o' Shanks Martin finally throws down his poker hand, rises, and takes the boy by one arm.

"'You've give nurse the slip,' says he; and a big, whoopin' laugh goes up from the other fellows. 'Don't you think you'd better get back home?'

"Now, does little Selford begin to tremble and whine? He don't, believe me! He flicks that little popgun from his coat pocket, and jabs its nose against Martin's ribs, and says with his teeth together:

"'You can't poke fun at me—d'ye understand, you big beef? Keep quiet! If you don't, I'll send you howlin' to the great majority.'

"Martin watched the hammer o' the popgun. He saw that it lacked a good deal o' bein' at the dangerous point. He knocked the weapon down with one hand, and grabbed it with the other.

"'Son,' says he, 'you ain't got no sense; but you have got some nerve. So I'll forgive you, and give your popgun back butt first, like a gentleman. Three squalls, boys, for the Popgun Kid!'

"Then and there, in a baptism of noise and powder smoke from a few dozen forty-fives, the kid got a name that stuck to him as long as he lived in that corner of the globe.

"Robert Selford got behind a bunch o' cowmen who was throwin' dice on one o' the rear tables, and commenced to watch the door. Fate answered his prayers short off. In walks a big, bearded man with his broad-brimmed hat pushed up in front and a pair o' the biggest forty-fives on earth at his hips—and his right hand rested ready on the butt of his right-hand gun. He keeps his eye on the crowd, backs up to the bar, and with his left hand tosses a little silver coin across.

"'A bag of tobacco,' he growls.

"Then the Popgun Kid steps from behind the dice throwers; and I've never seen another such a look on a human's face as I seen on the face o' Bill King when he seen Robert Selford. Robert Selford begins to shoot as fast as he can work the trigger—Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bill King, man of steel nerves and a brother to the devil himself for darin', done a thing that almost knocked us down with surprise; he broke out at the door, jumped on his hoss, and burnt up the wind gettin' away from Yellow Creek! His pistol empty, young Selford borrowed two forty-fives from convenient holsters without askin' for 'em, run to the door, and stood there blazin' away until they, too, were empty!

"Everybody recovered quick. It wasn't good policy to inquire into another man's affairs in them days. The miners and cowmen simply set the little Easterner on the bar and gave him three big cheers for havin' the sand in his gizzard to shoot seventeen times at King Bill of the Catalinas.

"A few minutes later Robert Selford, as white as a ghost, climbed down from the bar and went off to bed.

"That night after I'd hit the hay in my little shackhouse, I says to myself:

"Bill King has got a conscience yet. The only murder he's ever committed is still on his mind. He knowed Thornton Selford was an Easterner. When he seen Robert Selford, dressed in Eastern clothes, he knowed an avenger had come. And he was so upset about it that he didn't take into consideration the fact that the avenger was a tenderfoot, and just a boy at that.'

"You'll see how near right I was in my reasonin' after I get a little farther along with the tale.

"The next mornin' while I was waterin' my stock, Robert comes to me and says like he means it:

"'I must have one o' your hosses, Mr. Callahan.'

"'Hosses?' says I, foolish-like.

"'Yes,' says he—'and a couple of them things you carry water in.'

"'Canteens,' I explains. 'But most of all you want a real gun.'

"'No,' he objects. 'As I've already told you, I've practiced with this little fellow, and I'm used to it: I can hit a dinner-plate at fifteen yards with it, every crack.'

"'The only extra hoss I've got,' I says, 'is a calico pony that's so mean he's always been knowed by the name o' Pizen. If you think you can handle him, he's at your disposal. Also the two canteens, and a blamed good saddle. But when you start, kid, tell me good-by; because I like you a whole devil of a lot, and I don't believe I'll ever set eyes on you alive again.'

"'Stuff! Stuff!' says he. 'Let's have the hoss, saddle, and canteens.'

"'All right,' says I. 'It's your funeral. Remember, kid, that Bill King ain't likely to run from you any more.'

"He mounted the hoss, with water and grub tied to his saddle, and rode straight toward the red-hot Catalinas, with all of Yellow Creek standin' in the main street and watchin' after him regretful-like.

"'What made you let the little fool have them 'coutrements, Web?' somebody asked me.

"'You go and ask the kid!' I snaps.

"'No, Bill King won't run from him any more,' says Elversett, as he wipes the bar with an imaginary rag for imaginary spilled liquid. 'I've always heard as how the Lord sets a special angel to stand guard over fools. And I'm certainly in hopes it will turn out to be so this time.'

"That day passed, and another day come and passed. I had made my trips to the railroad in a deeply troubled state o' mind. Just as I was unhitchin' on the evenin' o' the second day, in rides Old Man Oliver, of the Oliver & Ogden Ranch, the Linked-O; he comes straight to me and dismounts.

"'Web,' says he, 'you know that there calico we sold to you some time back, the one the boys called Pizen? He come home a few hours ago, with a saddle on him, a bridle, and water and grub tied to the saddle. I'd 'a' brought him along with me, but he was a little lame from a dog hole.'

"'By George, sir,' I almost yells, 'the kid is right now lost down there in the desert or somewhere in the Catalinas!' You see, I knowed that if the kid had met Bill King, the water and the grub would 'a' been gone off o' Pizen's saddle.

"'What kid?' asked old Oliver.

"I explained all I could without breakin' my promise to Robert Selford.

"'We'd better hunt him up, I guess,' says Oliver. 'I'll start all the cowmen I can spare in the mornin'.'

"'And I'll utilize my four stage hosses in the same way,' says I, 'whether the blasted old stagecoach runs tomorrow or not. I can easy find three good riders among the miners here.'

"Well, the two parties spent the next four days in huntin' over that barren, red-hot country lookin' for the boy. We didn't find even a sign of him. I was fully convinced that he had added one more bleachin' skeleton to the desert. We rode back without talkin' any.

"When me and my three men rode into Yellow Creek, we seen Elversett hurryin' to meet us.

"'The boy's back!' he yells, seemin' as glad as if Selford had been his own son. 'Bill King brought him in a few hours ago. Both of 'em was mighty near dead—the kid was, anyhow. The kid owes King his life, now, and I reckon it'll settle the account betwixt 'em, whatever it is.'

"I went up to the boy's room although I was so dog tired that I could hardly walk. Robert was lyin' flat on his back, starin' toward the roof, with his sun-blistered fingers laced together across his chest. He didn't seem to know that I was anywhere near him until I stood over him and was speakin' to him.

"'Do you know who brought you in, son?' says I.

"'Do you think I ain't got no eyes?' he clips.

"'Did I mention your blasted eyes?' I snaps, for he'd riled me.

"'Do you think I'll let that stand between me and getting square for poor old Thornton's sake?' says he. And his blue eyes was shootin' fire at mine.

"'Don't you think you'd reelly ought to consider that Bill King saved your life?' I says.

"'Do you think I ought, Mr. Callahan?' He seemed now a mite sorry that he'd been so shortspoken with me a minute before.

"'I sure do,' says I. 'He let you shoot at him seventeen times, without firin' back; and at one shot he could 'a' fixed you easy! He found you half dead, and brought you in at the risk of his own liberty. He could 'a' let you go on and die out there in that red-hot Hades, and had one enemy less. And death for lack o' water is some death, kid, believe me!'

"'It reelly must be bad to die like that,' says he, musin'; and I thought I had impressed him with my plea for future peace. He goes on, still musin': 'I'll see if I can't arrange it.'

"'Er, how's that?' I says, bendin' closer to him.

"'Yes,' says he. 'I'll catch him asleep, knock him senseless, tie him up good and hard, and let him die with water before his very eyes. Because he killed my brother Thornton.'

"'Good-by, kid,' says I. 'I'm goin' now, and I don't hope to see you again. Bill King won't fool with you any more, kid.'

"He smiles as he shakes hands with me, and mutters, 'You're a bloomin' old woman!'

"When I went out to water and feed my four stage horses the next mornin', I found that one of 'em was gone. Also my saddle. Also two canteens and a lot o' grub from the hotel was missin'. And when Elversett knocked at the Popgun Kid's door, he got no response.

"This is what happened to Robert Selford the Easterner, as related to me afterward:

"He rode straight for the Catalinas, bein' guided by their peaks, which loomed up ga'nt and black in the dim starlight. His rashness was all gone now, and in its place had come the cunnin' shrewdness of a red man. Daylight found him hidin' his hoss in a big gully filled with greasewood and mesquite. Then he crawled out o' the gully, and began to steal up a ridge that afforded a fine view of the rollin' country and one side of the Catalinas. When he had reached the top o' the ridge, he hid himself in a nest o' bowlders, and begun to watch all points o' the compass for a lone man on a hoss.

"About noon o' that day, he seen a lone man on a hoss, with two big demijohns slung across his saddle, ride toward the headwaters o' the creek that had give the minin' camp its name. He knowed it was Bill King; and he reasoned that King was going after water and would be back shortly.

"No, Robert Selford didn't hit the trail after the bad man. As I said before, his rashness was all gone, and cunnin' had took its place. He waited right there on the top o' that ridge, roastin' himself in the broilin' sunlight, until King had come back late that afternoon. He watched King like a hawk watchin' a rabbit. He seen King ride into the mouth of a deep and narrow canyon that run into the side of the nearest of the Catalina peaks.

"Still he did not follow his man. He wasn't goin' to take any chances on bein' seen too soon. He waited until night had come before he made any move. Then he crept down to his hoss, wrote a note to me sayin' he was all right and tellin' me not to worry, and pinned it on the saddle, and turned the hoss loose to go home. You see, he hadn't feed nor water for the hoss, and he was too big-hearted to see the animal suffer any.

"This done, he commenced makin' his way toward the retreat o' the big, bearded man we called by the somewhat romantic name o' King Bill o' the Catalinas.

"He lost himself in the night a dozen times. The clumps o' desert scrub and the big bowlders, the ridges and the hollows, tangled him up bad. It wasn't until midnight that he came in sight of a little pile o' live coals, the remnants of a cookin' fire, which laid in front of a little hangout under an overhangin' ledge o' rock. He smiled with his teeth shut, and his right hand tightened its grip on the popgun. He knowed that he had found Bill King.

"He crept on his hands and knees, as slow as a snail, but without makin' the least bit o' noise, to where the bad man laid asleep. Bill was on his side, with his head on his saddle and his hat over his face. A big gun laid handy on the ground close by, and another big gun was in the holster that was turned up. The boy confiscated both o' these weapons, and with one of 'em struck Bill on the forehead and laid him out for a while.

(Continued on page four.)

TO LEDGER READERS

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THE GOLD-BRICK GIRL
AND
THE GOLD-BRICK MAN

By PHILIP R. KELLAR

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Begun in No. 31, August 1. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER IV.

BREWSTER and Dick were dressed when their host unlocked their door and bade them good morning, cheering them with the information that he had gotten rid of the "son of Anak," and that the coast was clear. He asked permission to examine the brick by daylight, and this being given him, he looked it over very carefully. Brewster's sharp eyes saw that he looked long and earnestly at the peculiar marking on one end, and that he seemed greatly satisfied with what he saw.

After breakfast the farmer suggested that he would take the brick into town, leave it in his safety deposit vault at the bank, and return with the money. Brewster and Dick objected, Dick strenuously, Brewster meekly. They offered a counter suggestion that they would remain while their host went for the money. The man did not favor that; he wanted the brick in a safe place as soon as possible.

"Then the three of us can go," Brewster said.

"Oh, no," the farmer answered hastily. "That would be foolish, Parson Proudman. The news would be certain to get out that you, a poor preacher, had a lot of money, and you would be a temptation to ungodly men."

Brewster, determined to secure the money before the farmer could have a chance to get the brick tested at the bank, finally prevailed upon the man to adopt a compromise plan. He and Dick would accompany the man to the edge of the town and await his return with the money.

"It will be only a short distance back to the bank for you to take the gold," Brewster concluded. "No one in town will know that you have paid us the money, and we can come back, wait for you, and let you drive us to the next station south. In that way we will be able to keep the heathen from learning what we have done."

At half-past eight the three started toward Warrington. The farmer seemed in a fever of impatience. Brewster and his partner thought they had never seen a victim so thoroughly mesmerized by the thought of making money on a bogus gold brick. They silently hoped nothing would happen to thwart their smooth-working trick.

They waited on the edge of the town, making their plans for a getaway while the farmer was going to the bank. In half an hour the man returned, counted out the money, tried to keep back five hundred dollars, was detected, explained with some embarrassment that his fingers were stiff, took another look at the brick, and handed the money to Brewster.

"I'll be back at the farm in time to drive you to Westman to catch the eleven o'clock northbound train," he said, as he turned back toward the town.

The two men walked southward briskly, without turning to watch their victim, until they reached a bend in the road. When they were out of sight of the farmer, they turned to the east and began to circle the town, walking rapidly for the next station on the intersecting railroad that ran toward Savannah, instead of north, as they had told the farmer they intended to go. They were chuckling with great delight.

"The 'son of Anak' is probably waiting to hold us up south of the farm," Brewster said gleefully. "The old hypocrite has had time to learn that his gold brick is lead, and is running about looking for the sheriff. That eastbound train is due at Idlewild at eleven-ten, and we've got four miles to make in the next hour and ten minutes."

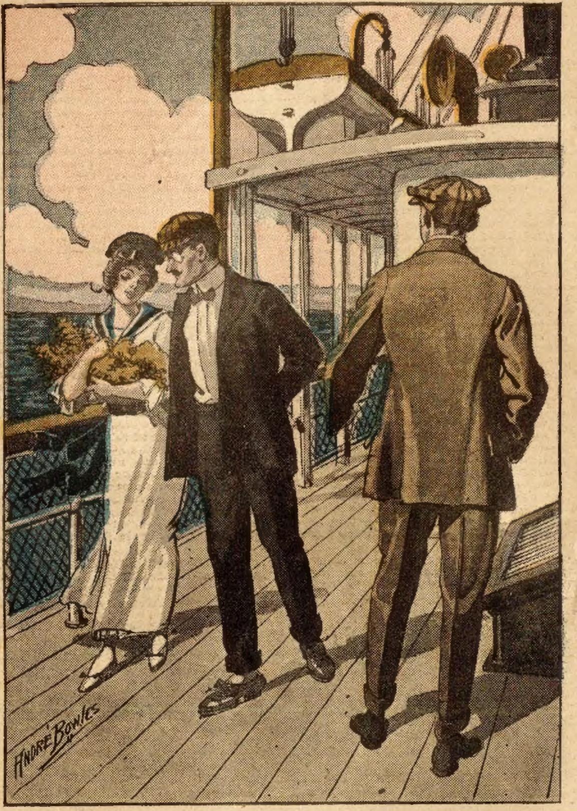
"But we're walking for ten thousand dollars, Con," Dick replied.

"You are walking for five hundred, you mean," Brewster answered quietly. "That was what I promised to give you for your part, you remember. I'll keep the four thousand I have advanced to Miss Alice Brown Eyes, and give her the other six."

"Con, you'd not be such a fool as to give up that money, would you?" Dick protested.

"My word, Dick. I can't break it."

They caught the eastbound train without difficulty. Dick again tried to persuade Brewster to change his plan, but the latter declined to talk with him.



The girl was Alice!

"I didn't got into this to make money, Dick," Brewster said firmly. "I don't intend to take a cent. I don't want to get money that way. I'm on the square, I tell you. Besides, I promised that little girl, and I'll keep my word to her. That's all I've got to say."

"Huh!" Dick grunted disgustedly.

They reached Savannah about six o'clock, Dick immediately taking a train north and promising to meet Brewster in New York the following week. Parson Reuben Proudman slipped into the station washroom, and five minutes later J. Randolph Brewster emerged from the same place, determined to find Alice of the Brown Eyes as quickly as possible, deliver the six thousand dollars to her, and get out on the midnight train.

Berating himself for his foolishness, Brewster hurried to the De Soto to watch for Alice, confident that he would not see her. He waited until eleven o'clock, then joined the stragglers walking south in Bull street, and went to the house in Thirty-second street. It was dark and apparently unoccupied.

"Of course she's flown," he said aloud. "She's probably in Halifax by now."

He wandered through the park back to the hotel and ate his evening meal, scarcely conscious of his actions. He was trying to make himself stop thinking of Alice, and wishing he might see her for her own sake, as well as to get rid of the six thousand dollars. The possession of the money made him uncomfortable. Five years of honest, though purposeless, living had eradicated from his nature all desire for the old life into which he had drifted against his better nature.

Now that the excitement of the game had worn off with its successful conclusion, he began to feel a sort of contempt for himself. Suddenly it dawned upon him that he was, in effect, attempting to make the girl a partner to his crime, and there came over him a great desire to see her and persuade her to stop her evil ways before it was too late.

"Huh! I guess old Dick's right," he thought. "The skirt has got me nutty."

The net result of his meditation was the decision not to leave that night, not to risk sending the money to an unoccupied address, even though he was certain the girl had arranged to have her mail forwarded to her, but to remain and make another effort in the morning to find her—and to prevail upon her to reform. He laughed at the thought of himself in the role of a preacher.

Brewster slept late, and awoke refreshed and with a clearly defined idea of his future actions. He would write a plain letter to Alice, telling her how he had sold the brick, enclosing the six thousand dollars, stating without mincing his words that he understood the whole affair, and closing with a bit of curt advice for her to stop her crooked practices before it should prove too late. During breakfast he mentally went over each paragraph of the letter he intended to write, and when the meal was finished he started for the writingroom to put his thoughts in writing.

At the cigar stand he bought a copy of the Morning News, glanced casually at the first page, and stopped in his tracks. Staring at him from the center of the page was a picture of Alice!

Above the picture, in big, black type, were the words: "Savannah's Gold-Brick Girl."

Brewster coughed, slowly folded the paper and stuck it into his coat pocket, and turned and strolled to the elevator. He would read the paper in the privacy of his room, unseen by any curious or watchful eyes, and though his nerves were tense and tingling, there was no outward sign of embarrassment or apprehension. Even after he had entered his room and locked the door, he did not quicken his movements, but carefully placed his hat and cane upon the dresser, and then spread the paper upon the bed and leaned over it. As he read, his eyes opened wider and wider, and his astonishment increased until the tenseness left him to be replaced by mingled mirth and horror and chagrin.

The story was sensational, but conservatively related. Miss Alice Butler, an orphan, a pretty stenographer, a resident of Savannah for some months, a Georgian by birth, had been made an heiress of a strange fortune through the murder of her uncle, James C. Butler of Warrington. Mr. Butler, the paper related, was a farmer who had lived on the edge of Warrington, and the brother of Miss Butler's father. About noon, Monday, Butler had been found on the road south of his home, unconscious, shot through the lungs. He had recovered consciousness before dying sufficiently long to tell the story of his assassination and the causes. Sunday night two strangers had come to his home, one representing himself to be an itinerant preacher from the Georgia hills in the north, the other one of his flock. They had a gold brick they wanted Mr. Butler to help them sell.

Mr. Butler had recognized the brick as one that had been given to his brother. There were some identifying marks on one end of the brick which Mr. Butler had learned from Tom Barton, a son of the man who had molded the brick. Barton had informed him that his father had placed in the center of the brick seven diamonds of large size and rare worth, which were heirlooms of the Barton family, having been brought to the Colonies in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The elder Barton, in an excess of religious enthusiasm, had decided to give the gems, valued at more than ten thousand dollars, to Parson Butler. Knowing that his family would object and the preacher would protest, he had hit upon the plan of hiding the diamonds in the brick.

Mr. Butler, after recognizing the brick, planned to get possession of it for his niece, he said. Tom Barton was in the house when the strangers came, but their visit was kept from him until the next morning. Mr. Butler had sent him south of the farm to intercept the men should they attempt to escape, and he had gone with the strangers to town. To allay the suspicions of the strangers, who, he was confident, had stolen the brick from his niece, Mr. Butler parted with ten thousand, five hundred dollars, to get possession of the brick, which contained, in addition to the gems, almost thirteen thousand dollars worth of gold. He expected to have the strangers arrested, after he had placed the brick safely in the bank vault.

When he had come back after depositing the brick, the strangers had escaped. He encountered Barton, who was furious, who accused Butler of trying to double-cross him, and who finally shot the man in order to rob him of the brick he was confident the farmer had hidden nearby.

Barton had been captured while trying to escape to the north, and a lynching had been narrowly averted by the arrival of Miss Alice Butler, who had been telegraphed to immediately. She had pleaded with the mob to give Barton a fair trial, the man had confessed that he had shot Butler in a quarrel, and he had identified the brick as the one his father had molded from gold collected by the men in the hills and had given to Miss Butler's father.

"Miss Butler, accompanied by her aged aunt, left Savannah hurriedly," the account concluded. "The shock has almost resulted fatally for the aged woman, and little hope is held out for her recovery.

"The interesting gold brick has been turned over to Miss Butler as her property. It has been broken open, and the gems have been found unhurt. The bank at Warrington estimates the total value of gold and gems at more than twenty-five thousand dollars.

"No trace has been found of the two strangers who brought the brick to Warrington. So far as can be learned they did not get off or on the train at this place, and must have come across country. They have ten thousand dollars which belongs to the estate of James C. Butler, of which Miss Alice Butler is the sole heir.

"Miss Butler says that the brick was taken from her home in Savannah last Friday night by a stranger."

Brewster read the account three times, very carefully. Then he arose, put the paper in his pocket, walked down the steps and out of the hotel by the side door, jumped into a street hack, and drove to the station to catch the Washinton and New York Express. He was glad he was not delayed by his baggage, his trunks being at the station ready to be checked.

When the Savannah River was crossed and the city was left behind, J. Randolph Brewster leaned back in the seat and sighed. It was a sigh of chagrin, disgust, surprise, regret. He had bungled terribly, and undoubtedly had made it impossible ever again to look Alice in the face. For an hour he puzzled over the matter, seeking a possible explanation which he might make to her, but finding none that satisfied hm. When he had finally recovered somewhat from the daze into which events had thrown him, he smiled when he thought of the way Baby Dick would receive the information of the latest developments.

"Anyhow, that girl is all right," he said to himself.

CHAPTER V.

AT THE last moment J. Randolph Brewster trotted across the gangplank of the steamer, Hamburg to New York. He had spent the summer on what he told himself would be his last jaunt through Europe for many years, and was returning to America to retire to the little orchard in north Georgia which he had purchased with two thousand dollars of the remaining four thousand of his heritage. He had determined to become a fruit farmer, hoping that the work would destroy any lingering germs of desire to live by his wits that might remain in his system.

It might chance, too, that Alice of the Brown Eyes would be attracted to return to the part of the country where she had lived so many years!

In his inside breast pocket, in a heavy linen envelope, sealed, and with her name upon it, were the six thousand dollars which he insisted belonged to her, and which, with equal vehemence, he insisted only she should take from him. Many times prior to his sailing for Europe Dick had aggressively told Brewster he was a fool for not using this money, and another fool for adhering to his determination to remain a wanderer from crooked and devious paths. Inasmuch as Brewster's several notes and letters, directed to Alice at Savannah and at Warrington, had been returned to him and he had received no communication from her, Dick felt justified in calling his friend several different kinds of idiots.

As Brewster leaned on the rail and watched the faces and figures on shore merge into an indistinguishable mass, he wondered if Dick hadn't been correct in his diagnosis. He had not enjoyed his summer's outing as he had anticipated. Life seemed rather flat. He tried to convince himself that it was because of the lack of adventure that the old way had held, but back in his thought he knew the real reason was because he wanted to see Alice Butler.

He continued looking shoreward, with unseeing eyes, a quizzical smile on his face, until finally he became conscious that some one was closely watching him. One of the reasons for Brewster's success in trifling with the law in the old days had been an uncanny ability to know when he was being watched. For some seconds longer he maintained his position gazing steadily ahead, before he began to look about carefully, still retaining his smile. Presently he spied the watcher, and his nerves grew tense.

Leaning on the rail, about fifteen feet to his right, was a well-dressed, elderly, kind-faced man. Brewster recognized him instantly as Slippery John Maynard, the confidence man who had turned him from the straight path by skillfully fleecing him of all his money. Slippery John stared back. Brewster lifted his eyebrows slightly and again looked shoreward.

The few persons between them soon left the rail, and Slippery John sauntered toward him. He spoke courteously, as one stranger might address another, with a commonplace remark about the weather. Brewster replied in kind. Slippery John paused and spoke in low tones:

"Glad to see you, Con Brewer."

"My name is J. Randolph Brewster."

"Good name." Slippery John smiled. "I'd like to see you in my stateroom—something important."

John nodded, as if to a casual acquaintance, and moved on. Brewster watched him as he walked toward the bow, stop and look at a girl standing some distance in front, then turn back. John nodded again as he passed Brewster, and said with a smiling grimace:

"Peacherino up there!"

Brewster made no reply. With some difficulty he kept the disdain from showing in a curling of his lip corners. Slippery John disappeared into the cabin.

Brewster remained at his place for some time, wondering what the old "con" man wanted to see him about. Brewster regretted having encountered him. He had wanted to break away entirely from all of his old associates, and to forget completely those five years of his life when he had lived on his wits and not always honestly.

It had been nearly four years since his last encounter with Slippery John. He knew that the old gold-brick man had long before abandoned that "line" as out of date, and had taken up smuggling as more remunerative and less risky. He felt confident that Slippery John's presence on the ship was a part of a plan to cheat Uncle Sam out of a few thousand dollars in duties. Brewster decided that John's evident pleasure at seeing him was caused by the man's desire for assistance.

At last Brewster decided to see Slippery John and get the disagreeable job over with. He started toward the bow, but stopped almost immediately. The girl whom John had described as a peacherino was at the same place talking with a man whose back seemed to Brewster like that of an old friend. He waited, and soon the man left the girl and walked toward Brewster, and was quickly recognized as Tommy Claxton, one of the most successful special agents in the customs service, a detective feared by all smugglers more than any other man in the service. Claxton's broad grin told Brewster that he, too, had been recognized, and he was not surprised when the detective stopped and spoke to him.

"Hello, Con Brewer."

"How are you, Mr. Claxton. My name is Brewster—J. Randolph Brewster."

"Good name, too." Claxton's smile grew wider. "Where'd you lift it?"

"It belongs to me," Brewster replied, with quiet firmness. "I've had no other for five years."

"That's right," the detective answered. "It has been five years since I'd heard anything about you. Been laying low—living on your income?"

Brewster's eyes twinkled as he looked keenly at the detective. There were men in the world who might have told Tommy Claxton that Brewster's twinkling eyes were a danger signal.

"I don't know that it's any of your business, Claxton, but I've no objection to telling you." Brewster's voice was soft. "I've been doing nothing that you or anybody has any cause to question. My money has been—mine."

"Oh, of course." The detective saw the threat behind the twinkle, and unconsciously stepped back to protect himself.

"You'll be wasting your time if you watch me," Brewster continued. "Besides, I don't care to be watched."

"Huh! Is that a threat?" Claxton bristled.

"Merely a statement of fact," Brewster rejoined calmly.

"Quite a coincidence that I should find you on the same boat with Slippery John," the detective said sneeringly.

"Isn't it?" Brewster's smile softened. "I confess I was as much surprised to see him as you were to see me. What's his game?"

"You may be on the square now, Con Brew——"

"Brewster."

"Mr. Brewster," the detective corrected. "So far as I know you are. But please don't make me crack my lip laughing at your questions."

"Tommy Claxton, you're a nice boy, and I like you well enough not to want to waste your time." Brewster, by some effort, retained his patient gentleness. "That's the only reason on God's green earth why I'm taking the trouble to tell you that I hadn't seen or heard from Slippery John for nearly five years until I met him here just a few minutes ago."

"I saw you," the detective answered laconically.

"So did anybody else who happened to be looking this way," Brewster replied a little sharply. He shrugged his shoulders. "All right, if you're too stubborn to take a friendly tip! That's all I've got to say."

He turned without waiting to see the effect of his pronouncement upon the special agent, and walked briskly toward the bow. He was very glad he had encountered Claxton before his interview with Slippery John. It decided him not to see his old friend. It was wiser, he decided, to remain away. No matter how well he might resist John's persuasive arguments to re-enter "the game," he would be a marked man, in the eyes of Claxton. Brewster was not afraid of the detective, but he appreciated the fact that Claxton might make it very uncomfortable and decidedly inconvenient for him should his suspicion be fanned into a blaze.

Halfway to the prow, where the woman stood who had attracted Slippery John's admiring glance, and with whom Claxton had been speaking, Brewster stopped. There was something familiar about her figure, encased though it was in a heavy steamer coat. For several seconds he watched her before continuing his walk, quite slowly, in her direction. He tried unsuccessfully to place the woman as an associate, perhaps a partner, of Slippery John, but decided that if such was the fact she had joined forces with the smuggler after Brewster had severed all links that connected them. Yet he was still sufficiently curious to continue walking toward her, hoping that she would turn before it grew darker that he might see her face. He was partially hidden by one of the boats when she turned her face toward him. He suppressed an exclamation.

The girl was Alice of the Brown Eyes!

Brewster stood transfixed with admiration at the wonderful transformation that seemed to have taken place in her appearance. She seemed so rarely beautiful that he almost gasped. Gradually, however, he realized that the change in her had not been great. Her color was fresher; she had a buoyant, happy expression; her cap and costume set off the beauty of her face and figure as the shabby hat and dress had concealed it in Savannah.

Brewster watched her with greedy eyes until she turned her face toward the west again. Then he approached, slowly, half fearfully, half emboldened by his great desire to speak to her once more. She did not turn again, and when a step behind her he whispered:

"Alice—of the Brown Eyes."

She turned quickly, but without apprehension. Brewster's head seemed to whirl when he saw the smile that lighted up her face as she recognized him. He held out both hands in his joy.

The smile left her face as suddenly as it had come. With a calm, steady gaze, she looked at him without seeing him, and then, after what seemed to Brewster an age, she slowly turned away from him. His hand, which had started for the pocket in which was the linen envelope, stopped in midair. He stared at her, opened his mouth, closed it without uttering a sound, drew up his head proudly, and walked away.

Brewster told himself he was hungry when, after an hour of strenuous mental effort in his stateroom to forget Alice, he began to dress for dinner. He would not admit that the emptiness in his stomach was the result of the loss of a great hope rather than the lack of food. He had pondered over the situation, finding a dozen good reasons why Alice should cut him, and none that gave him any comfort. In a hazy sort of fashion he persistently connected Alice, Slippery John, and Claxton in a tangle of smuggling trouble, and finally caught himself asking if Alice had not, like himself, ignorantly sold a genuine gold brick believing it to be bogus, and if she were not a crook in league with Slippery John, and in danger of being caught by the clever Claxton.

The question cleared his muddled thoughts, and he promptly put the suspicion out of mind. It returned with increased strength when he entered the dining saloon and saw Alice seated beside Slippery John at the Captain's table, and apparently greatly interested in what he was saying to her. The suspicion developed into half-conviction when, after some searching, he located Claxton, disguised as an old man, directly opposite them. If he had not known Claxton was aboard he would never have suspected the kindly old man to be the special agent.

The conclusion of this interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

* * *

Out West Stories

King Bill of the Catalinas

(Continued from page two.)

"'Now, by Henry!' he jubilates, his eyes on an ear with a notch in it. 'Now, by Henry!'

"Bill King's saddle-cinches, of course, was made out o' short ropes. With these short ropes the boy bound the bad man's wrists behind him, and he also bound his ankles together. He paid 'special attention to the knots, and the result was that no man on earth could 'a' got out of 'em unhelped. He throwed a little fresh wood on the live coals, and soon had a little blaze. Then he takes up one o' the demijohns, and dashed a bit o' water on the outlaw's face.

"It worked. Bill King come around with a lot of hoarse gaspin', and set up with a good deal o' difficulty. He winked the blood out o' his eyes, seen the boy, and remembered.

"'Well, you've got me at last, kid,' he says, and laughs low.

"'I sure have,' replied Robert Selford, mighty haughty. 'And I'm sure goin' to fix you, too.'

"'And I s'pose you'll burn me at the stake, in true Big Injun style, won't you?' says Bill King.

"'No manner o' death is quite bad enough for a man who could bring himself so lowdown as to take the life of a fellow like my brother, Thornton Selford!' exclaims the little Easterner. And his blue eyes was hard and piercin'.

"Again Bill King laughed.

"'You wait,' says Robert. 'I'll make you laugh out o' the other side o' your mouth, before I'm done with you.'

"'Just how?' inquires Bill.

"The boy tears the wrappin' from one o' the demijohns, and points to it.

"You're goin' to be left here to die in sight o' that water,' says he, emphatic-like.

"Once more Bill King laughs.

"'Yes,' says Robert, 'because I'm Thornton Selford's brother.' And the flickerin' light o' the little brushwood fire showed his jaw muscles to be standin' out plain and jerkin' when he'd said it.

"'How much money have you got, kid?' asks the bad man.

"Robert Selford seems surprised at the question. Before he thinks, he answers: 'About two hundred, I guess. Why?'

"'That's enough money,' says Bill King, 'to take two people to New York. I'd like very much to go back with you when you go.'

"'You ain't short on nerve, all right,' replies the boy.

"'Of course not,' smiles King. 'Well, how about it—will you take me with you?'

"'Not much!' clips the kid.

"'When you hear what I'm goin' to tell you,' says the man we called King Bill of the Catalinas, 'you will.'

"Robert stares his unbelief. King settles himself back against the wall of stone.

"'Kid, I haven't always been a bad egg. I used to live back East. I come out here to hunt for gold, and in answer to the call of red blood. I couldn't find enough gold to keep me alive, and I went to gamblin' to make out. I went from bad to worse, and when I tried to reform I seen that I'd done went too far. I——'

"'Cut that out!' roars the boy. 'Save your breath! You can't work on my sympathies by anything like that. You killed Thornton Selford, and you've got to pay for it.'

"Bill King's eyes twinkles under their bloody brows. He smiles a faint smile, and goes on with his story:

"'Then I decided that I'd be an outlaw—that I'd go the rest o' the way. The only drawback was that I was afraid my people back East would find it out, and be disgraced. So I——'

"'I said cut that out!' bellows the boy. But the bad man only smiled and continued:

"'So I rigged up a scheme to make my folks think I had died here in the West. I sent a letter to my brother, which was supposed to have been found by a cowman, statin' that I had gone down at the hands of an outlaw—and addin', kid, that I had clipped a notch out of each one o' the bad man's ears before he got me. Fate sent a notch out of each one of my ears by means of bullets before two months had passed! Little one, don't you know me now? But you never saw me with a beard; and then there's the years between——'

"'Thornton, by Henry!' breaks in the kid. 'But I won't believe it! It can't be! Oh, it just can't be!'

"But it was. And the two went back to New York together, where the man we had called King Bill of the Catalinas found a new life waitin' for him."

This is the first of a series of splendid short stories, all laid in the West, which will run in the Ledger during the coming months. The stories will all be by famous writers, among them being William MacLeod Raine, Hapsburg Liebe, P. G. Estee, William Alfred Corey, Earl H. Emmons, Edward Cahn and others. Some of the stories will be humorous, some strong and dramatic, and all will deal with some interesting phase of life in the West. The "Out West" story in next week's Ledger will be called, "Won On the Home Stretch," and is one of the funniest stories of horse racing ever written. Don't let it get away from you.

* * *

Praise.

Uncle Cy was 96 years old when he died. He had made a lot of money, and had devoted his entire life to a spectacular and desperate system of never letting go of a nickel. His reputation as a tightwad and a skinflint was so gorgeous and brilliant that its effulgence lit up all of New England and cast a powerful glow as far south as Tennessee and as far west as Minnesota. When it came to stinginess, he was the original gold medal old guy.

The last two years of his life he was bedridden, and his children, who had suffered from his economical habits of life, used up the time wishing that he would die. At last he did die, and the family scattered around a lot of money to pay for his funeral and to lay him out in state. At the proper time the neighbors came in and looked at him. On such an occasion in New England it is customary for everybody to say something nice about the dear departed. This time, however, the people from the community merely looked in silence.

At last an old man in whose veins the milk of human kindness rippled and pumped and roared took his stand beside the casket and lifted up his voice in a eulogy to Uncle Cy.

"Cy's gone now," he said, "and I'll say this for him: He was always good at keeping his barn door shut."

* * *

Too Hasty.

He noticed a brisk fire blazing on the hearth. His wife pointed to it.

"Do you see something lying across the log there?"

"Yes."

"Well, that's the magazine you brought home yesterday. Do you suppose I'd let stories like that lie around where our daughter could see them?"

"Were they as bad as that?"

"Worse."

He was silent for a moment.

"Well," he presently said, "it was all right for you to condemn the stuff, but you might have let me read it first."

* * *

Home.

He had been around from church to church trying to find a congenial congregation, and finally he stopped in a little church just as the congregation read with the minister:

"We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done."

The man dropped into a pew with a sigh of relief.

"Thank goodness," he said, "I've found my crowd at last."

The Diamond Eye

Or, THE GIRL FROM IMAM

By George Ethelbert Walsh

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CHAPTER V.

THERE was no way for Pennington to measure the period of his unconsciousness, for he had taken little note of the time of the evening when the mysterious girl had entered, but in a general way it must have been an hour or two before he started up with a little exclamation of surprise. He was still weak and trembling from the effect of the poison, and he rushed to the window to refresh his lungs with clean, stimulating air. As his memory slowly came back to him, he recalled the events that had led up to his sudden fit of unconsciousness.

Still breathing in the pure air, he reflected softly.

"I didn't know there was any other kind of a fool I could make of myself, but it seems I was mistaken. To be taken in by a fair siren at my age—and she a foreigner in a green dress and scarlet turban!" He laughed at the thought; but immediately became sober as he asked himself: "I wonder what she was after?"

He swung around and took the first full glance at the room. A little exclamation of surprise and disgust escaped his lips.

"Robbed, lock, stock and barrel!"

The room was in the greatest disorder, as if somebody had made a rapid but thorough search of it. Drawers had been pulled out and their contents emptied on the floor; closet doors stood ajar, and the clothes within were flung about in piles; even the cushions of the chairs had been ripped open, and the edges of the carpet pulled up at different places. Most of his personal possessions were scattered around in wild disorder.

"Not robbed, but searched," Mark remarked after a hasty examination of the room. Everything was there; nothing was missing—not even his money and watch. The intruders, if they had found what they were looking for, had not, so far as Pennington could see, relieved him of anything of real value.

"They must have got the wrong house," he concluded finally. "It was some other man they were after. It was a put up job—the whole thing. I can see it now. The old man was beating the girl to attract my attention, and then while I ran down that slip of a beauty climbed through the window. Well, she gave me a fragrant dose of perfume.

He grimaced, sniffing the stale odor of the fragrance still clinging to the curtains and draperies, and flung wide the door to permit a draft of air to blow through. Then he began picking up his things to put them back in their places. The disorder was so great that it required nearly an hour of steady work to get the room cleaned of the litter.

"The next time I'm taken in by a pretty face, I'll——" he began, but he broke off suddenly and smiled. "I wonder where she got all those looks," he mused a moment later. "She's a foreigner, but of what nationality? Perfume of Circassia, she said. Circassia! Why, that's where Europe's prettiest women used to come from. Well, the stock isn't extinct yet if this little slip of a girl is a fair sample."

Later in the evening, while still dreaming of a pair of wondrous eyes that seemed to have bewitched him, his mind reverted to Major Morris. With a little start he flung away his cigar and buried his head in his two hands.

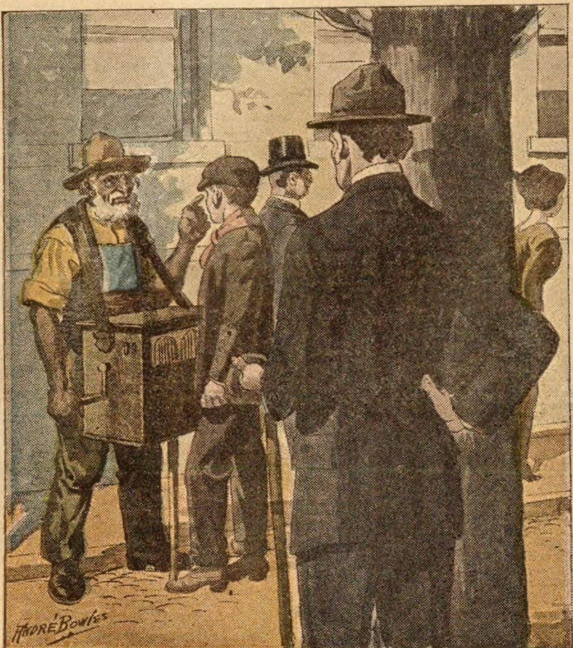
"Three days, and not a beginning!" he muttered. "Now, how am I going to checkmate the old duffer? A hundred thousand to get those bonds, and the market for my little investment still dropping!"

The evening's stock quotations showed that the pet railroad stock which the Major had induced him to put all his fortune in to recoup his earlier losses had not yet reached bottom. It was declining under a strong bear attack managed by the astute old financier. Each twenty-four hours showed Pennington that his margin, protected by his securities in the old Major's hands, was growing narrower and slimmer. He groaned once or twice, and tried to fortify his spirits with a brisk walk in the open air.

The following morning Pennington was no better prepared to force a solution to the problem confronting him than the night before. His dreams had been filled with perplexing and impossible schemes. In his waking hours he knew that nothing but a stroke of good luck could save him.

He walked forth with a gay and jaunty air, nevertheless, determined to keep the specter of worry away as long as possible. Crossing the park square he was accosted by an old man with a wheezy hand-organ, who extended a battered cap and insinuatingly asked for a pittance. Mark dropped in a little change and strode onward.

Across the square he suddenly swung around to retrace his steps. As he did so he noticed the owner of the wheezy hand-organ gesticulating violently to some one across the way. The next moment a fair-sized youth emerged from a nearby building and approached the man. Mark was standing behind a tree so that the two could not see him. There was a rapid exchange of words between the two, and then they separated—the old man hobbling off in the opposite direction and the boy following Pennington.



There was a rapid exchange of words between the two.

"Mighty spry old bird," he thought, referring to the organ-grinder, whose hobble had turned into long, swinging strides. He waited until the man had disappeared from view around the corner, and then as the youth approached he dodged to the other side of the tree.

The boy could not have been more than fifteen or sixteen, and he was dressed in clothes that seemed to fit him poorly. He came along rapidly, looking straight ahead. He passed Mark in short, jerky strides, which later turned into a little trot.

"Looking for any one, my boy?" Pennington reflected thoughtfully. "If so, I'm here."

Something in the bearing of the boy struck him as familiar, and he was trying to solve the tangle. He also had a vague idea that the two—the old organ-grinder and the boy—were shadowing him, and his sudden dodging behind the park tree had disconcerted them.

He waited in his place of concealment for a long time. The boy had disappeared up the avenue, and the man had gone around the corner of the opposite street. Near the tree was a bit of shrubbery, and half concealed by it a park seat. Pennington changed his position to the seat and waited.

Fifteen minutes later he was rewarded by the reappearance of the two. The man had got rid of his organ, and was walking along rapidly now, talking angrily to the youth who lagged behind. Their foreign jargon was unintelligible to Pennington even when they approached near enough to the shrubbery for him to overhear their conversation. The man was angry and wrathful; the boy tearful and sobbing.

Mark was on the point of revealing himself to the couple once or twice, for the peculiar actions of the old organ-grinder had aroused his curiosity. What earthly reason had the man to shadow him? Was it a case of mistaken identity? The incident amused rather than alarmed him. On the other hand, he was not anxious to get into a brawl with any of the hot-headed foreigners who infest our shores. He had heard too much about their feuds and violent tempers; he decided to remain concealed until discovered.

He was somewhat relieved finally when the old man started briskly across the park, leaving the youngster behind, after bestowing upon him a few last instructions in forcible language. The boy was left on duty apparently to watch out for Pennington's possible return, while the old man made a detour around the block.

Pennington could see the face of the boy through the shrubbery; he was standing within ten feet of the park bench, his back turned to Mark. He remained in this position for several moments; then suddenly the shoulders began to tremble and the head to bob sideways in a ludicrous fashion. The boy was sobbing softly and noiselessly, but with great paroxysms of grief. The tears rolled down the face until the eyes were blurred. To conceal evidence of his emotion from any stranger, the youth drew within the shelter of the shrubbery until his back was within a few feet of Mark.

"My boy, what's the trouble?" Pennington asked, stretching forth a hand and closing it firmly on the youth's wrist.

There was a little gasp and smothered cry as the eyes of the boy turned full upon the man.

"Oh, please, sir, let me go!" the lad cried.

But Pennington caught a near view of the face and eyes. With a short, hard laugh, he looked into the frightened face, and then with a quick jerk of the hand tore off the cap that concealed a mass of coiled hair. He had recognized in one glance the features of the girl who had betrayed him so easily the night before.

"Why this disguise, my dear?" he asked, smilingly. "Were you looking to betray me again? What's the game this time?"

The face turned deathly pale, and the frightened eyes filled with tears. She grew so agitated that Mark had to lead her to the seat.

"Now, my pretty one," he continued, "let me hear the whole story? What were you after in my house last night, and what are you and that old father of yours up to today?"

The girl dropped on the park bench and bowed her head. Mark could see that she was crying, softly and noiselessly. But he was not so easily affected by her grief. He had been deceived by her once.

"What's the game?" he repeated, still keeping a firm hold on the slender wrist.

The girl continued to sob in silence. Mark waited for some time, meanwhile studying with renewed interest the beautiful head of hair and the fair brow. Even in her disguise her beauty was unmistakable.

"Will you tell me, or must I have you arrested?" he added, trying to assume a severe tone of voice.

After a few moments of struggling for self-control, she raised her head and looked at him. Mark bit his lips in vexation. Looking into those eyes was like gazing at stars, and with hypnotic results. He felt his head swim. With the tears glistening in them they were far more entrancing than before.

"Oh, sir," she murmured brokenly, "you won't believe me—not after last night—and—and besides, I'm—I'm afraid."

A convulsive shudder shook her form.

"Afraid of whom? That worthless scamp of a father? I suppose he is your father?"

She did not answer.

"Well, you needn't be afraid of him. If you'll tell me the whole story I'll protect you from him. Be honest with me, and you won't regret it. But understand, if you try any more trickery, I'll have you arrested—you and the old man."

His words seemed to have no effect upon the beautiful creature. Once she did glance up into his face, but her eyes immediately dropped and a blush tinged her cheeks.

"Will you tell me?" he persisted.

"Will you believe me if I do?" she asked in a prefectly frank, innocent voice.

Mark hesitated a moment, and then nodded his head.

"Yes, I'll believe you—once more. Now what is it? Why are you following me and searching my house? What is it you're after?"

For a moment she swayed between fear and desire. Then she leaned toward him and whispered nervously:

"The Eye of Imam! Where is it?"

CHAPTER VI.

PENNINGTON sat very still, watching the girl, and trying to comprehend the meaning of her words. At first he was inclined to take it as a joke, but the seriousness of the face before him warned him that it was no laughing matter with her. Then he inclined to his former conclusion that it was a case of mistaken identity. The couple had mistaken him for somebody else.

"The Eye of Imam!" he repeated after her. "I never heard of it, and don't know what it is. Who's Imam, and what's the matter with his eye? Lost it?"

"Oh, sir, you make fun of me," she replied in genuine distress. "You must tell me where it is, or he—he will—will——"

"Come now, don't have any more hysterics," he interrupted, as she began sobbing again. "I want to get at the meaning of all this mystery. I'm all in the dark. What's the Eye of Imam, and why do you think I've got it?"

She looked at him soberly as if to read his thoughts; then she said simply and directly:

"Kobad, the Muturelle, gave it to you."

Mark suppressed a smile with difficulty.

"You must be mistaken, my sweet little lady," he said. "I don't happen to have the acquaintance of Kobad, whoever he is. I never knew any one by that name."

The girl looked at him steadily.

"You were with him the other night when he was stricken down in the street, and he gave you the Eye of Imam to keep until he came out of the hospital. Did he not?"

For a moment Pennington was nonplused. Then his experience with the foreigner who had been sandbagged in the street occurred to him.

"Oh, you mean that beggar—that poor devil who died in the hospital?"

"Yes, that was Kobad."

"Well, he didn't give me anything to——"

She searched his face anxiously as he hesitated.

"Why, yes, he gave me a bottle of sacred water to keep for him," he added, a moment later. "Said it was sacred water from the spring of Selim. Was that the Eye of Imam? If it is, you and your father can have it."

"A bottle of sacred water?" she said slowly. "And nothing else?"

"Not a blessed thing."

She was silent so long that Mark finally added:

"Is the Eye of Imam a bottle?"

She shook her head slowly. "No, sir, the Eye of Imam—is a diamond."

"A diamond!"

She nodded, her eyes bright and shining.

"A diamond so—so—big," she added,

forming a circle with her forefinger and thumb about the size of a black walnut. "And beautiful—wonderful! But of course you know the Eye of Imam—every one knows it."

"Sorry," Pennington replied, smiling, "I'm so ignorant. Where does this Imam hail from? And what is he?"

"Oh, sir, you make fun," she protested again, surveying him with a little pout. "Imam, the great God of Fire, every one knows."

"Oh, I begin to see now," he interrupted. "Imam is an idol, and this diamond was one of his eyes. That's interesting. I've heard of such stories before—seems to me most of your heathenish idols have eyes of diamonds or rubies or emeralds. Must be the fashion out where you come from. And so Imam lost one of his eyes?"

The girl by his side surveyed him in doubtful uncertainty, but to his question she nodded gravely.

"Who stole it?" Mark asked bluntly, which caused her to start and turn a trifle pale.

She began to tremble, and before answering she took a quick look through the shrubbery to see if any one else was listening. Pennington was still holding firmly to the wrist, determined not to let her escape until he had the story. When she seated herself again by his side, she sighed and looked pensively at the ground.

"Did this Nabob or Kobad steal it?" he added, after a pause.

"Still she hesitated, breathing heavily as if laboring under some great emotion. Finally she turned those glorious eyes toward him again and searched his soul through and through.

"I can trust you?" she asked simply. "You will believe me, and not—not—tell—Feridum?"

"Who is Feridum?"

"He—the Mollah—the holy man of the temple."

"You mean that organ-grinder—your father?"

"I don't think he's my father—no, I'm not his daughter, but he's the Mollah of the temple, the conductor of the rites."

"Then what's he doing with you if you're not his daughter?" Mark demanded a little savagely.

"He's my master. I must obey him."

Mark looked sharply at her to see if this was another trap; he was not sure of this little slip of a girl. One moment she appeared as simple and innocent as a child, and the next as wily and mature as any woman. But the ways of the East are not the ways of the West.

"Suppose you tell me the story of this diamond," he said finally, settling back in the seat. "Kobad, I take it, had a hand in stealing it. Did she not?"

She nodded.

"And I'll bet Feridum, as you call that old organ-grinder, had a finger in the pie, too."

"You speak funny," she stammered, puzzling to interpret this expression.

"Oh, I mean he helped Kobad steal it, didn't he? He was a confederate."

She looked nervous and distressed, and once more glanced through the shrubbery, but no one was in sight or in hearing distance. Then she turned to him and whispered:

"Kobad, the Muturelle, keeper of the temple, stole Imam's eye, and Feridum helped him to get away with it," she said. "But the Eye of Imam burned into Kobad's soul and made him break his promise. He escaped with it to this country, and forgot to tell Feridum where he was going."

"And Feridum got wind of it and followed? He wanted his share of the stolen goods? I don't blame him. But Kobad, you say, was the foreign chap who died in the hospital?"

"The Eye of Imam ruined his soul, and then killed him."

"Not without the aid of a blackjack. Well, it doesn't matter what killed him. He's dead. And Feridum thought he gave me the diamond?"

She nodded gravely.

"And that's why you played that little trick on me to search my room? A pretty frame-up."

"Oh, sir, I didn't want to, but—but—he made me. He threatened me, and—and——"

Mark comforted her with reassuring words and waited for her sobs to cease.

"Never mind, I forgive you. But what hold has this Feridum on you if he isn't your father?"

"He's my master."

"Your master? In what way? I don't understand. A guardian, you mean?"

"Oh, no, sir, not that—just master, and—and—I'm his slave."

Mark sat up straight and nearly dropped his hold on the wrist. He glanced quizzically at the speaker to see if she was in earnest.

"We don't recognize such things as slaves in this country any more," he said. "So if that's all the hold he has on you, I'd tell him you're free, and he can go to—to——"

She shuddered and glanced half-appealingly and half-fearfully into his eyes.

"But he's always been my master, and I his slave, since I was a little girl," she confided. "I have to do what he says, or he'll—he'll—kill me."

"Not in this country. We don't allow such things, and he knows it. He's working on your ignorance. But how'd he get you in the first place?"

"I was stolen from home—in Circassia—and taken to Persia to be the slave of the Mollah of the mosque. When I was old enough I was to be—to be——"

Mark rose from his seat in anger.

"Then you're not even of the same nationality as that old reprobate?" he exclaimed. "He's a Persian priest, or Mollah, and you're a Circassian girl stolen from home?"

A little excited by his sudden anger, she nodded half-fearfully and watched him with pathetic eyes. Mark looked around to see if the old organ-grinder had returned. If he had, there would probably have been trouble for that individual.

"See here," he said, turning to her, remembering that he had not even asked her name, "what's your name? I mean your real home name—Circassian name?"

"Cintra," she answered, "but he calls me——

"Never mind what he calls you. I want your real name. Cintra sounds good to me. Well, Cintra, I'm going to take you away from Feridum, and if he interferes, I'll have him chucked in jail for kidnaping. How old are you?"

"Oh, nineteen," she replied, blushing, womanlike.

"I'd think you were sixteen to look at you," Mark replied, surveying her with honest admiration.

He had dropped her wrist by this time, and if she had desired she could have slipped away from him. For some moments he stood in doubt and perplexity.

"Does this Feridum treat you well?" he asked finally.

"Oh, yes—sometimes he's good to me."

"And sometimes he isn't?"

"He beats me when he's angry, but not often, and threatens to kill me if—if——"

"If you tell anybody what you've told me?" interrupted Mark, as she hesitated and turned white. She nodded.

"Well, don't be afraid. He won't dare to do that in this country."

"You don't know Feridum. He's—he's a holy man, and a great magician."

"Holy man, eh? Not too holy to steal the Eye of Imam. If his powers of magic are no better than his holiness, I guess he won't hurt anybody. Don't be afraid of him, Cintra."

Their eyes met an instant. Mark looked steadily into the azure depths of hers and experienced a queer sensation. Hers dropped after a moment, and the color flamed gradually into her cheeks.

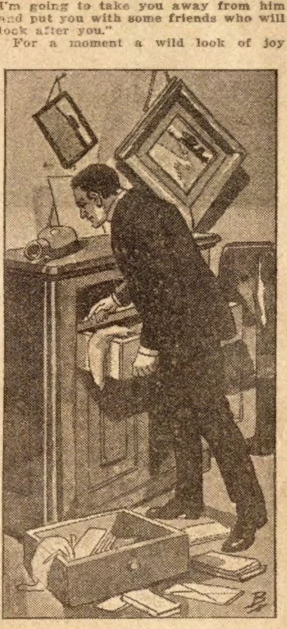
"You're very good, sir, and after what I did to you last night. I can never forget that."

"Cintra," Mark said quietly, taking one of her hands, "do you want to leave this Feridum and have your freedom?"

"Oh, sir, I—it couldn't be done," she stammered.

"Yes, it could, and I'm going to do it. I'm going to take you away from him and put you with some friends who will look after you."

For a moment a wild look of joy flamed in her eyes, and then it died away, and the face dropped in a sad expression.



"Robbed, lock, stock and barrel!"

"He would find me and kill me," she murmured.

"No, he wouldn't dare. He couldn't find you."

"You don't know Feridum. He could find me anywhere. I couldn't escape him. He never forgets or forgives."

Suddenly she jumped to her feet and her eyes dilated with fear. "There he comes," she breathed in awe. "I must go."

Pennington swung around and saw the old organ-grinder coming down one of the streets that opened into the park. The girl stood, fearful and apprehensive, in her tracks. Then she turned swiftly to him and said:

"If you have the Eye of Imam, give it to him. Please, please, for my sake, or—or he'll kill you. You don't know Feridum."

"But I haven't got it. And if I had it, I wouldn't give it to that old reprobate. I'd keep it or present it to you as a gift."

"Please, please!" implored the girl, evidently unconvinced. She dropped to her knees and took his hands in hers and kissed them. "Please, for my sake!" she continued. "Please!"

"But I've told you I don't know where it is, Cintra. Don't you believe me?"

She looked up at him; a sob escaped her throat, and the hands dropped. Without a word she rose and ran swiftly out of the shrubbery to meet Feridum.

CHAPTER VII.

MARK waited in the shrubbery until the two met. What words passed between them he could not guess; but he did notice that the girl was nervous and was trying to entice her companion away from his hiding-place. She was not confessing her part in the interview, at any rate. The old man appeared sullen and crestfallen, and permitted himself to be led away from the shrubbery without guessing the reason.

Pennington waited until they had both disappeared. Then he ventured forth and made a wide detour down side streets to his club. It was while there, sipping a cooling drink, that his mind turned from Cintra to the diamond which the two old conspirators had stolen from the temple. He stopped watching the crowds in the streets and cast his eyes with a perplexed frown up at the ceiling. If Kobad had the diamond hidden on the night he was sandbagged where had he hidden it when carried to the hospital? Had the police or hospital orderlies got possession of it, or had it been lost in the street during the encounter? Or, more likely than either, had the highwaymen robbed him of it before frightened off by Mark's unexpected appearance?

This latter seemed a probable solution to the problem; but while he tried to convince himself of it his mind reverted to the bottle of sacred water which the dying man had requested him to keep until he could call for it. Suddenly Mark jumped to his feet with a little exclamation.

"By Jove!" he cried. "The diamond was in that bottle! What could be easier than to conceal the stone in a bottle of ordinary water!"

The ingenuity of the trick made him smile with gratification. A diamond concealed in a bottle of water would be invisible, especially if the glass was blue. The story of the sacred water was all a fiction, and the pasting of the word "poison" on the bottle was simply a trick to keep any inquisitive person from experimenting with the contents.

"I've got the diamond, after all!" he added after a pause. "And if it's as big as Cintra said it's worth a fortune. It's stolen goods, anyway, and belongs to Cintra and me more than it does to any one. I'll give old Feridum a fight for his money."

Pennington left the club in such haste that more than one old habitue of the place raised his eyes in surprise and made some remarks about the rudeness of "young cubs." Hailing a taxi he ordered the driver to make haste to his house, and without glancing around to see if any spies were watching him he took the steps two at a time and dashed into his home. The sealed bottle of sacred water was kept in his medicine cabinet, and thither he hurried, anxious to find out if his conclusions were correct.

He closed the door of his room and locked it after him. He wished no interruption in his little investigation. He even took the precaution to pull down the shade, remembering Feridum and his spying eyes.

Then he threw open the door of the medicine cabinet and glanced eagerly inside. But the sealed bottle of sacred water was not there. Mark stared in surprise, his mouth agape. Had the old man taken the bottle away with him on that night he searched his room? Or had——

Mark suddenly closed his mouth with a snap; opened it again, and growled:

"Still another kind of a fool. I chucked that bottle away two days ago! A diamond worth several hundred thousand dollars gone to the ash heap!"

He dropped in a chair and dripped with perspiration. The very suddenness of the reaction made him smile grimly. It is not every day that one has the opportunity of laying his hands on a precious stone worth a king's ransom! and to think that he had carelessly chucked it away along with old bottles and tin cans! After a moment of reflection he started to his feet again, galvanized into activity by a new thought.

"I may not be too late yet to recover it," he exclaimed. "I'll search every old rag-picker's and junk shop of the city!"

With this resolve in mind he started forth in search of the elusive. A quick trip to the dumping station where the city disposed of its garbage and ashes brought out the information that bottles, tin cans, and all salable articles were sorted and disposed of by a single contractor. Thither Mark hurried, using a taxi without consideration of the cost; but he found himself checkmated once more. The bottles sorted out and collected each day were sold to a sub-contractor, a dealer in old junk and bottles. Pennington groaned. If the precious bottle was not lost by the time it had passed through the hands of two dealers, it would perhaps be broken or at least its contents spilled.

"Too late, I'm afraid," he growled. Then remembering the words of the dead, he added, "But I'll not disgrace Dad's name by giving up yet."

After much chasing and searching he managed to locate Tony, who made a business of collecting old bottles and selling them again at a fair profit. Tony owned an old bottle factory that was stored from cellar to ceiling with all conceivably shaped bottles. They were piled mountain-high, waiting for distribution among those who could use second-hand bottles.

"Yes, I sell bottles," Tony replied to Mark's inquiries. "How many you want?"

"Only one—but it's a particular bottle."

Tony eyed him suspiciously.

"I sell them by the hundred—not by one," he said.

"If you have the bottle I'm looking for I'll pay you the price of several hundred." Then realizing that he must not excite Tony's suspicions too much, he added, with a smile: "You see, I threw this bottle away by mistake. It had a special medicine in it that I needed. I've lost the prescription. It's not worth anything to anybody else, but is valuable to me."

"All right," Tony answered, his suspicions allayed. "You look for it. I got no time."

So, with Tony's permission, Mark began the herculean task of going over tons of bottles, piled in stacks or dumped carelessly in great mounds. It looked like an endless job, and for the moment he was inclined to give up the hunt.

"But this was a blue-glass bottle," he murmured. "That will simplify the process of sifting them out."

Whipping off his coat, he began his search in earnest. Discarding the bottles that did not have the right shade of blue, he made some headway in his work. He labored until the light grew so dim in the dusty factory that he could barely tell a blue from a black bottle. The sweat was starting at every pore; he was dirty and tired, and still there was an enormous mound of bottles waiting to be sorted. It was time to close the shop, and Tony was fidgeting around anxious to get rid of his queer customer.

"You no find it?" he asked, approaching him.

"Not yet," replied Mark. "Can I come tomorrow and finish this heap?"

Tony shook his head.

"They're coming for them in the morning. I sold them today."

Mark looked at the huge mound, wondering whether it would pay him to buy the whole lot, and then take his time hunting for the prize.

"What sort of a bottle you say it was?" asked Tony, anxious to help.

"A blue bottle about the size of a beer bottle. I forgot its exact shape."

"Maybe this wouldn't be it," the man added, picking up a bottle from a corner. "It was marked 'poison', and I didn't mix it with the others."

Mark gave a quick glance at the bottle held in the man's hand, and then jumped for it.

"That's it! That's it!" He cried, snatching the bottle from Tony's hand. He clutched it to his bosom and started to move away.

"Oh, I forgot," he added, turning. "Here's the price of it."

The bill which he passed to Tony amply satisfied that person for all his worry and trouble. Mark hurried out of the building with the bottle clutched in his two hands. The seal had not been broken, and if the diamond had ever been put in it he had it safely in his possession once more.

It was dark outside when he emerged from the building. There was no sign of taxis in that poor quarter of the city, and Mark made his way along on foot. By crossing a square and going through a small, dirty alley he could reach a line of street cars that would take him near his home.

When he plunged into this dark and lonely alley he was too absorbed to notice a shadow which seemed to follow him. He was totally unconscious of the presence of an enemy until a dark form seemed to spring out of the gloom. Still clutching at his precious bottle, he tried to ward off the blow; but he succeeded only in partly intercepting it.

It landed a glancing crack on his head, and for a moment he saw more wonderful stars than any he had ever seen reflected in Cintra's beautiful eyes. As he went down on his knees he clutched desperately at his bottle, but

(Continued on page eleven.)

Detective Keeneyes' Craft

Or, THE DELEMERE MYSTERY

By J. Breckenridge Ellis

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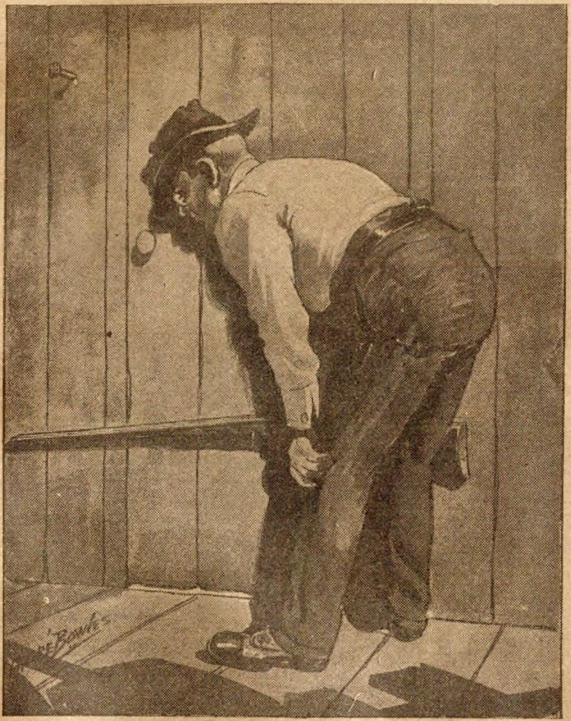
CHAPTER XVII.

THIS thing must be investigated," declared Farmer Ashby. "Mrs. Frentwait saw the man pass her hovel; she swears it was Mr. Delemere. And now you tell me you saw him, and that that is who it looked like to you."

"Yes—and he disappeared right over yonder," faltered Howard, still looking toward the west.

"Quick!" cried the farmer, leaping from his horse, and hastily tying it to a picket fence beyond which was a weedy garden.



Voices came from the little room.

Howard nodded and set off at a run. The farmer followed, muttering, "There has been a mystery too long already over these Delemeres, and if we can catch Delemere, we'll make him give an account of himself."

Howard did not reply. He hurried up the street past small cottages and vacant lots and gardens toward the direction he had indicated—a pasture which extended a considerable distance toward the west.

Coming to the big gate he tried to open it, but as it was wired up in an intricate manner, he climbed the gate.

"This is outrageous, wiring up gates," growled Farmer Ashby, climbing over more stiffly, and cautious to avoid the barbed wire that stretched along the top of the gate.

On the other side, Howard set forth at a quick pace and stopped before a haystack.

"It was precisely at this spot," he panted. "I saw him come to this haystack, and then he disappeared."

"He must have gone around it."

And Farmer Ashby dashed to the other side; no one was to be seen.

"No," Howard answered, "if he had run to the other side, I could have seen him as he went on his way. This pasture is plainly to be examined from where I stood in the street. Look—over yonder is the very spot where we were when I told you what I had seen. I tell you he couldn't have got out of this pasture without my seeing him. I was sort of rooted to the spot with amazement at wondering what could have become of him and if it could possibly have been Mr. Delemere, when you rode up. I tell you, he could never in the world have run out of this pasture without my seeing him."

"I believe you are right," Farmer Ashby agreed grimly. He was in a very ill humor because, on account of the difference with Mr. Delemere about Mrs. Frentwait's property, he was chagrined to have to hunt him on such mysterious clews.

"I'll tell you what it is," he declared. "The man—Mr. Delemere, or whoever he is—must be under this haystack. There's no other place in the pasture for him to hide. Not even a tree for him to climb."

"How could he have had time to get under the hay and leave no loose straw to betray him?"

"He must have made his nest all ready beforehand. He's under this haystack. And I'm going to get him out."

They began exploring the sides of the haystack, but it was so hard and solid it soon became evident they were on a false trail.

"Maybe there's an opening at the top, loosely covered over with hay."

"But he could never have climbed this stack; it's too steep."

"There's no knowing what he could do. A family that could disappear as the Delemeres could, could reappear just as unaccountably. Where's a ladder?"

Howard shook his head.

"Howard, we can't give up such a certainty as this. You stand here and guard the haystack, and I'll hurry to the nearest neighbor's and borrow a ladder."

"Very well," Howard agreed.

The farmer hurried from the pasture. He did not have very far to go before he reached the cottage of some one known to him, and at this cottage he secured the needed ladder. Carrying it back, he had some difficulty in getting it over the gate.

But Farmer Ashby was now so thoroughly in earnest, and moreover was so sure that Delemere must necessarily be in that haystack, that he would not permit himself to be daunted by difficulties.

"Wait," Howard called, seeing that the ladder was hung up in the barbed wire, "I'll come and help you."

"No, you mustn't," retorted the farmer quickly, "you stand right there and guard that haystack; I don't want him getting away while you are over here with me."

After considerable delay, the ladder was brought to the spot.

"I'll go up," said Ashby.

To this Howard could not very well object, inasmuch as Ashby had had all the labor of bringing the ladder.

Setting the ladder carefully against the stack, the farmer slowly climbed up as if he expected the fugitive to become startled at his approach and fly away on mysterious wings.

Arrived at the top of the haystack, he thrust his arms about.

"What do you find?" Howard called.

There was no answer.

"Any hollow in the hay up there?" Howard asked.

"No," was the short answer.

"Is it pressed down in any way to show some one has been there?"

"There's nothing here to show anything."

Farmer Ashby came reluctantly down the ladder.

"I'll go up and look," Howard declared. He did so, but saw no sign of any one but the farmer having been up there before. He declared, as he descended, "He didn't hide in the haystack."

"No," Farmer Ashby agreed, drawing down his brows darkly, "you are right. He didn't hide in the haystack. Maybe you are mistaken about his having come this way."

"Mistaken? Why! How could I be? I was staring at him just as if he had been a ghost. It looked so like Mr. Delemere that I felt certain it was Mr. Delemere. You don't think I'd have taken my eyes off such an apparition as that, do you? And he came right here—right to this haystack; and I supposed him crouching down behind it when you rode up."

"Then while I was talking to you from my horse, he must have darted away."

"But look how big the pasture is," Howard objected. "You were not talking to me half a minute, no, not a quarter of a minute, before I was staring this way. For just as soon as you said the old woman had seen Mr. Delemere, it made me look. He couldn't have run out of the pasture without us both seeing him."

"Well, you will admit, won't you, that he isn't in the pasture now?"

"I will admit it. He couldn't be in it without our seeing him, unless he was in this haystack. And we've now proved that he's not in the haystack."

"Then if he didn't leave the pasture, and yet isn't in the pasture, what do you conclude?"

"I can't form an opinion," Howard declared, desperately. "It's just like all the rest of the Delemere mystery. I don't understand any of it. First all of them disappeared; then all of them have been seen since, except poor Alice, who was kidnaped—but although Mrs. Delemere and Edgar and Mr. Delemere have been seen since the dynamite explosion, they are as anxious to avoid being caught as if they had been guilty of some great crime. Now, anybody that knows the Delemeres, knows how good and honest and upright the whole family were. There couldn't have been a crime unless it was one against them."

CHAPTER XVIII.

WE HAVE now come to one of the most remarkable developments in the mystery of the Delemere disappearance.

There was a miller in Meadowville by the name of Jensen. Jensen lived alone in a little cottage just behind his big flour mill. He was a bachelor and somewhat of an eccentric character, but was highly respected in the community as a man of honest principles. His word was readily accepted, for he had not been known to deceive anybody. He had been known to speak out the truth when to do so was to his own material loss. Therefore, when he told, afterward, what is now about to be related, his story, however it amazed the citizens, did not cause them to doubt the account.

Jensen, who was somewhat of a poetic temperament, had given his mill a name; not such a name as ordinarily fits a mill in a small town, but one suggested by the lay of the land in which the property was situated. He had named his mill "The Glen."

There was a deep pond in one corner of the little glen, which was drawn upon for mill purposes, and the little cottage stood on the margin of this pond. There was a tiny footbridge from the steps of the cottage across a bend of the pond to the beaten road running up before the mill platform. The pond was surrounded by shade trees and tall grasses. It was a beautiful spot, and the shape of the land, rising slightly all about it, made its name of "The Glen" appropriate.

One night, about eleven o'clock, Jensen was surprised to discover a light in the

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upper part of his rambling frame mill. His custom of going to bed at ten o'clock was so well known, that it had almost become proverbial in Meadowville. On this particular night, he had, as usual, gone to bed at ten o'clock. He did not know why he rose at eleven, or a little after eleven, unless some premonition warned him that all was not right at the mill.

He had left his bed to breathe the fragrant air of the summer night as it stole in the window from over his dimpled millpond, and was thinking of nothing except that the night was beautiful and he ought to enjoy a good sleep. Then he saw this light.

It issued from a chink between the boards of the wall in the uppermost part of the great old-fashioned red building.

He muttered, angrily, or at least uneasily, "Tramps!" His next thought was, "They will set my mill on fire!"

He rushed into his clothes, and when he was dressed—in a very few minutes—he was about to dart across his little bridge when it occurred to him that there might be several tramps in his mill, hence might give him trouble if he sprang upon them unarmed. Accordingly, he turned about and secured his hunting gun from a corner, for he had never owned a pistol.

With this gun he went across the bridge to the mill, but not recklessly as had been his first impulse. In fact, he went as softly as possible, and was careful to go where the shadows were deepest.

Having reached the old mill, he slipped through the back door which some one had left ajar, and crept over the dusty floor toward the narrow staircase. It was not dark, because the moonlight came through the cobwebbed windows, but as he went up the stairs he entered dark space, because up here there were no windows except small square holes with wooden shutters.

As he had perceived from his bedroom window, the light had proceeded from a small boxed-up corner, a sort of office which had once been a flour bin. It was odd that any one had ever thought of having an office on the second-story floor, particularly as the stairs had always been rather difficult. But the owners of this mill had never made money before Jensen took hold of it, having indulged in all sorts of vagaries and extravagances.

Voices came from the little, disused room. Some sort of discussion was evidently in progress. Jensen approached on tiptoe, well in shadow. Through the boards that formed the partition-sides of the big box, came penciled lines of light. Jensen reached the door.

He hesitated to jerk it open. His gun was loaded and cocked, but Jensen was a mild man, and the thought of threatening the tramps and possibly being forced to fire upon them, was more than he could endure philosophically.

Yet it would not do to leave them there to revel through the night. Doubtless they had a plentiful supply of whisky with them, and over their cards there would be quarreling—their light might be upset—the barn would then blaze away without any pity from them—and the insurance was not what it should have been.

Torn between these conflicting emotions, the miller decided at last to take a careful observation of the interior before proceeding to extremities. The pine boards that formed the walls of the office showed several vacant knotholes, but all of them were above his head.

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"I concluded if it would tide him over a morning's heavy work, it might help me, so on my way home one night I bought a package and next morning I had Grape-Nuts and milk for breakfast.

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Always moving with the utmost caution, and always carrying his shotgun, which was a serious handicap, he hunted and found a keg which he brought to one of the walls directly below the lowest knothole.

Then, scarcely daring to breathe, he placed one foot upon his keg, and with his disengaged hand grappling at a scantling, he drew himself laboriously up, succeeding in stifling the slightest noise.

When he was on a level with the knothole, he paused there a moment irresolutely, as if with the presentiment that what he was about to see would surprise him more than any mere tramps might be expected to surprise a man thus spying upon them.

Then, catching his breath, he opened his eyes, and stared into the little boxlike room which for several years had been unused.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN THE little boarded-up space, the miller discovered three people. They sat upon the floor, for in the room there were no pieces of furniture. In the midst was a lantern.

There was a middle-aged man, a middle-aged woman, and a young man.

The young man was Edgar Delemere.

The middle-aged man was his father.

The third person was Mrs. Delemere.

The miller knew the family well, and there could not be any mistake. The light was in their faces, and extraordinary as their presence was there, it did not occur to Jensen for a moment to doubt their identity.

These three people, who had not been seen together since their house was dynamited, sat as composedly upon the floor, their feet tucked under them, as if there had never been any mystery about their lives. They were talking in low voices; so low that the miller could not understand the words. He stared through the knothole, perfectly silent, at the same time dazedly trying to make up his mind what to do.

They had been his friends. Here they were, secreting themselves in his mill. That they did not want to be discovered was plain enough. But why were they there? What were they doing? And why did they want to hide?

When the members of the family had been discovered about the neighborhood, they had always been each by himself; this was the first time all three had been seen together. Where was abducted Alice? Had she also escaped? And was it her custom to meet with her family?

The miller pressed both hands to his head. The mystery was enough to make him lose his mind if he dwelt upon it. He would not dwell upon it. But what should he do?

Presently he decided that the matter was too big for him to handle alone. If he made his whereabouts known, he could not imagine what would happen. These Delemeres were so intent upon remaining hidden that they might even resort to violence in their effort to escape detection. If he made a noise, Edgar or Mr. Delemere might rush out and attack him.

True, it had always been a most peaceable family. But people do not disappear from houses and lands and places of business and social circles without the gravest of reasons.

Jensen climbed softly to the floor. The voices were still murmuring cautiously.

He passed around till he stood in front of the clumsy door, but with no intention of remaining there.

He had already decided what to do: Hunt up somebody of authority, tell his story confidentially, and with that man—perhaps the sheriff—return the next night; then, if the Delemeres were again enjoying their rendezvous in his mill, they would be confronted.

Having reached this decision, Jensen was about to steal away, when the voices became audible in part, perhaps because the crack in the door was wider than the cracks in the boards of the wall. He could not hear much, but certain words floated out to him. He held his breath to listen.

CHAPTER XX.

THE first words that the listening miller heard, were spoken by Edgar Delemere. Edgar said:

"And then, after all, we may be mistaken."

To this his mother replied something which Miller Jensen was unable to catch.

Then Mr. Delemere said, "But there can be no mistake about the place."

"I am not sure of that," spoke up Mrs. Delemere. "I never have been sure of that."

"You know my reasoning in regard to it," returned her husband.

"I know, yes, I know, and your reasoning was good. It is good. But still, when it comes to the meaning of other people, you never can tell by your own reasoning just what their reasoning is. Of course, if everybody acted according to logic, there wouldn't be any mistake about it, and in that case I should say that you have shown remarkable penetration in thinking of this room."

"And I still think so," spoke up Edgar. "Even if he turns out wrong, it was very shrewd for father to think of it."

"Yes," his mother answered wearily, "but what good will his shrewdness do us if he is wrong? What good can it do poor Alice?"

"Anyway," said her husband, reluctantly, "there is no other course open to us, for we have been unable to decide upon any other location. If either of you can imagine a more likely place than this, I shall surrender my reasoning without a struggle. Our one desire is to find Alice, and if we don't find her here, I can't imagine where to look."

"True," sighed Mrs. Delemere, dejectedly.

"It will soon be time," remarked Edgar, bending down to examine the watch which his father had opened.

"We'd better shut off the light," said Mr. Delemere.

Then Miller Jensen discovered that the lantern had a slide, which on being shoved across the groove, completely concealed the light. This slide was accordingly shot forward, and absolute darkness reigned not only in the old office but in the outside loft, since the moonlight did not penetrate the solid wooden shutters of the mill.

Within the boxlike room was perfect silence. They were waiting for something or somebody—waiting for what? The miller paused there irresolutely. Should he also wait to see what would happen?

But if a man or men were presently to come upstairs, they would in all probability bring a light with them, and by means of this light would at once discover him waiting.

Hastily casting about in his mind for some scheme that would enable him to watch what happened without being discovered, he remembered an empty barrel in a far distant corner of the barnlike room, near the sloping roof. Carrying thither the keg, he waited, meaning to climb within the barrel at the first indication of an approaching sound or an approaching light. As the time passed by and nothing happened, he seated himself upon the keg where he could sit with his back to the wall, the barrel being in front of him, thus shielding him for sudden surprise.

His corner seemed so cozy and secure, that he decided not to get into the barrel, after all, but to wait in its protection. In all his movements, he was careful to make no noise. So cautious was he in this regard, that unconsciously he soothed himself by his own care into a state very dangerous to one desirous of watching any unforeseen event. In short, in perhaps half an hour, the miller was sound asleep, so comfortably settled in his nook that there seemed no likelihood of his waking up before day.

In fact, dawn was stealing up the entrance of the narrow stairs when he opened his eyes with a start, wondered why he felt so stiff, then shifted his position for a softer part of his bed, and found he was sitting upon an empty nailkeg. It did not take him long to recall what had happened the night before, as well as what he had expected to see happen.

With an exclamation of dismay he started up, and softly approached the office-room, though at the same time he felt that his caution was needless.

In this he was right. The office-room was deserted. Mr. and Mrs. Delemere and Edgar Delemere had gone as mysteriously as they had appeared, and there was not a sign to show that they had come back, as it were, from the dead.

Having persuaded himself that nothing was to be discovered upstairs, the miller hurried below, examined the mill, looked for footprints on the road, where of course nothing was to be seen, then examined the margin of his millpond. All in vain.

When his men came to start up the mill, Jensen, without saying anything to them about what had happened, went to town, wondering to whom he had better relate what he had seen. He had intended to tell the sheriff, but he had begun to doubt the wisdom of this, reflecting that, after all, it is not a criminal offense to disappear, and should he complain to the law about trespassers, his old friends, the Delemeres, would take it in very ill part, should he be the cause of getting them into trouble.

Although it was so mysterious, he felt that the Delemeres must have a most excellent reason for hiding, and that reason, he was sure, judging by the words he had overheard, was the safe recovery of Alice Delemere.

Now, nobody was so much interested in finding Alice as was her lover, Howard Whittleby. It seemed, therefore, the best thing to do to tell Howard, and accordingly that is what the miller did.

Howard had already been too greatly stunned by such discoveries as he himself had made, to hope to do anything with the startling facts brought to him by Jensen. After trying to take them in, he stood for some time in brooding silence, then said in a low voice:

"Jensen, I believe I can trust you—I am going to tell you a very important secret."

CHAPTER XXI.

"A SECRET?" repeated Miller Jensen, with a start. "Do you mean that you already know something about the Delemeres that I do not know?"

"Not at all. If I had inside information, I should not have this secret to impart. I am going to tell it to you because you were always a friend of the Delemeres, and I am sure I can trust you. Besides, it will be a relief to speak of it to somebody, and as you will soon understand, it is a matter concerning which I will not want to be speaking to everybody."

"Well, what is it, Howard?"

"Have you heard any discussion in regard to employing a detective to investigate the Delemere mystery?"

"Yes, something, but it fell through from lack of funds."

"Just so. The sheriff came to me and suggested timidly that as I was very anxious to have the mystery solved, possibly I would give a large sum, and the other citizens would make up the small deficit among themselves, and thus secure the services of one of the most celebrated detectives in the country."

"Yes — Richard Zellars, commonly known as 'Keeneyes.'"

"You are right. Well, I refused the proposition entirely."

"You didn't feel able to advance so large a sum?"

"That was not by any means my reason."

"But you surely want the mystery cleared up more earnestly than the ordinary citizen."

"True—for everybody knows my interest in Miss Alice."

"Then if you want the mystery explained, and you have the means——"

"I will explain, for that is my secret. I feel sure that if it is made public that a famous detective is going to work on the case, the Delemeres, who are already devoting, seemingly, all their energies to keeping hidden, would vanish altogether."

"Then you intend——"

"Yes, I intend to employ a detective without letting a soul know of it—with the exception of yourself. By making

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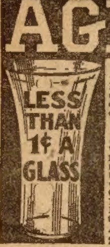

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this exception, I will be able to discuss the case from time to time; otherwise, I feel sure that my head would burst with the horrible maze of the whole affair."

"Have you decided on your detective?"

"Of course—Keeneyes, just as the sheriff wished; only, I shall not let the sheriff know I have employed Keeneyes."

"I believe you are proceeding wisely," said Jensen, after some time spent in thought. "But if a stranger comes here, the town will want to know why he is here."

"I will have to trust to the discretion of Keeneyes. He is a man of skill, and no doubt can make his presence in Meadowville appear reasonable, aside from any connection with the Delemere case."

"Yes, you are right. And when shall you go after him?—if you will excuse my intense interest in the matter? Of course, as your secret——"

"Oh, as I said, I have made an exception of you. Well, I shall not go after him; I wrote him a long letter, explaining conditions. I was afraid to go after him, for somebody might follow my movements. It is known how interested I am, therefore everything I do is closely watched. I was sure Keeneyes would already have read about our extraordinary happenings, so I only alluded to them in general terms, then made my proposition."

"And did he agree to come?" asked Jensen, anxiously.

"He did. Not only so, he is to arrive this very evening on the seven o'clock accommodation train. If you will come with me to the station, we will no doubt see him leave the car."

"I will surely join you on the platform some time before train time," the miller declared, emphatically, his face lighting with hopeful anticipation.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE miller highly appreciated Howard Whittleby's confidence. All that day as he went about his duties, he was thinking of the Delemere mystery.

That night, it was his purpose again to slip upstairs in the old mill and discover whether or not the family were assembled in his small office-room. But in the meantime, there would be the evening train to meet, on which Keeneyes was expected. Certainly the day was full for a middle-aged bachelor who had not been accustomed to unusual happenings.

The train, as Howard had reminded him, was due in Meadowville from Edgely (the home-town of the detective) at seven p. m. It was not more than half-past six when the miller, after a very hasty supper, arrived at the station platform. This station was a rendezvous for the idlers, particularly the black idlers, of the town, and the coming of the train was always awaited with much interest. However, so well known was the time-table that nobody was on the platform when the miller stepped upon it, except Howard Whittleby.

By a prearranged agreement, they merely nodded to each other, and during the half-hour of waiting—in the meantime, stragglers coming up, and the 'bus rolling to the platform, with the usual excitement over trunks and express-matter—the miller and the young man were careful to keep apart. No one would have gained the impression, by watching them, that they were there on a common mission.

When at last the train came in, about twenty people left the cars. Of those, the majority were well-known citizens who had been looking after their farming interests in the nearest small towns along the route; there were also several ladies who had been to Kansas City shopping. There were left five strangers, or at least five were all that Howard counted, and on later consultation with the miller, he was confirmed in the belief that no more than five strangers had left the train; and indeed, that number was unusual for Meadowville.

Howard had sent his photograph to Keeneyes in order that the detective might know him on leaving the train; fearing that he himself would be unable to identify the detective.

But none of the five strangers paid any attention to him, although all of them were obliged to brush past him. Of these five, three were evidently traveling men who had struck up an acquaintance on the train. They took the city hack, had their grips put up in front, and arranged for trunks to follow them to the best hotel. Of the two strangers thus unaccounted for, one was a middle-aged man of immense black whiskers who sauntered slowly along the sidewalk toward town, scarcely looking to right or left; the fifth was a bare-legged urchin of fifteen or sixteen, carrying a bundle upon his back, possibly his total possessions.

The hack rolled away.

"Well," said Howard, in a low voice to the miller, "what do you think?"

"That man with the big whiskers must be the detective," said Miller Jensen, but he spoke doubtfully. "He's in a disguise—maybe."

"But why didn't he notice me? I thought the same—but I expected him to step up to me and be recommended to a hotel. Anyhow, we'd better follow him casually."

They walked leisurely from the station.

"That barefooted boy, of course, is out of the question," said Jensen, with a laugh. "But as to the traveling men, it's possible that Keeneyes has fixed himself up with a grip and trunk to deceive everybody. He may have gone away in that hack."

Howard hesitated. "Ye-e-es," he murmured, "but if he has come as a traveling man, he couldn't stay here long in that character. As soon as people found out he wasn't trying to sell the merchants any goods, they'd begin to wonder why he was hanging around; and just as soon as they began to wonder why he's in town, they'd jump to the conclusion that he's a detective. You know very well no stranger can come here and stay long without starting that suspicion."

"That's so," said Jensen. "Even if they didn't think of the Delemere case, they'd suspect him as trying to ferret out our whisky cases. Yes, you're right. It is very improbable that any of the three drummers is Keeneyes. It couldn't be the little boy. Therefore it must be this big-whiskered fellow just ahead of us."

They walked along, careful to avoid any appearance of deliberate following. The man with the black whiskers seemed to have all the time in the world at his disposal. He sauntered with irritating slowness, his hands always in his pockets, his hat always pulled rather low over his eyes, his eyes always looking straight ahead.

Not far from the station was a cottage which had been converted into a hotel by the haphazard addition of various rooms which, without any symmetry, made of the frame hull a useful convenience to transient guests of limited means. The terms, including three meals, were only one dollar a day. The big-whiskered man stepped upon the unroofed porch before this hotel, the front room of which was devoted not only to the purposes of a lobby, but a grocery store of slender proportions. He stepped inside.

"We'll buy something," Howard whispered to the miller, and led the way in, a few steps behind the stranger.

There was nobody in the room, for Jim Tibbs, both groceryman and landlord, found it impossible to be where he should have been at all times.

Howard, as a friend of Jim Tibbs, at once made himself master of ceremonies by saying, "The landlord will be in soon—at least he never stays out of this room when he can help it. But if you want to buy something, I'll get it for you. I'm well known to the landlord—my name is Howard Whittleby."

If the stranger recognized in this name the man who had written for him to come to Meadowville to undertake the mystery case, he made no show of recognition. "My name is Bear," he replied, in a gruff voice, "and I would like accommodations here for two or three days."

"Jensen," said Howard to the miller, "go and hunt Jim up and find out if there's a spare room."

Jensen, without any ceremony, opened an inner door and explored the interior, passing from hall to rooms without the needless ceremony of knocking, merely whistling as he went to notify people that if they wished to preserve any privacy they had best be quick about it.

Howard, left alone with the stranger, remarked, "And so you intend to visit Meadowville for several days. Does it happen that you are in any way connected with some of our citizens?"

"Not at all," was the hoarse-voiced response.

"You are looking about for a place to buy, perhaps?"

"Not me."

"I could recommend you to a thoroughly reliable real-estate agent——"

"No, much obliged. I'm not in the buying business. I wish your landlord would show up. Maybe I'd better go farther and hunt another hotel."

"Don't think of such a thing. Jensen is making so much noise, he's bound to rouse somebody soon. Now—I think I hear Jim coming. Yes, here he is. Jim, this is Mr. Bear—wants to stay with you a while. Mr. Bear, this is Mr. Jim Tibbs, the landlord.

The miller came in close behind the landlord, crying, "I rousted him out of his hole, all right! Now, Jim, go ahead and attend to business."

In a few moments the stranger went to his room, and Howard and the miller were obliged to go on to town, much perplexed.

"If it was Keeneyes, he'll hunt me up, I suppose," murmured Howard, "but why he didn't give me a wink or some signal, I can't understand."

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

Didn't Need Help.

Four-year-old Helen wished to get into the playroom, but the gate (which had been put at the door to keep her baby brother in) was locked. She tried again and again to climb over it, when at last her mother heard her say, "Dear God, please help me get over this gate."

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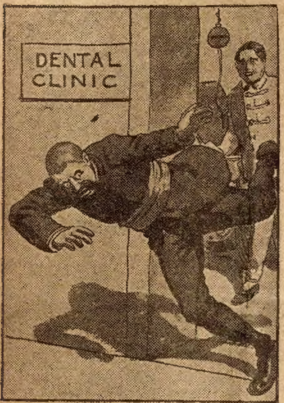
A Dental Dilemma

By Earl H. Emmons



Heinz went through the door like an electric shock.

THE first time we saw him was when he inserted his features, accompanied by a two-bit smile, into our department one day recently and arrested our attention by turning loose a medley of sounds which very much resembled what a French menu looks like, only a trifle thicker.

Sometime later we discovered that he was a Bulgarian, dubbed Heinz by the hospital attendants, because no one could understand his line of talk enough to get his real name and because he occupied Room 57.

The fact that Heinz left the scenes of his nativity when the grape shot became too habitual for comfort, made one think that he was not without some amount of gray matter in his anatomy, but when, on the second day after his arrival in the land of the free and home of polite graft, he paused in the middle of a busy street to contemplate the lofty structures and allowed his person to become entangled in the cog-wheels of progress, it looked as if his judgment wasn't so keen after all and that he would probably have done as well by staying at home and being shot up by the enemy.

After the curious visitor was carefully picked out of the mechanism of two automobiles and a truck, the pieces were brought to our hospital and a bunch of squab doctors who needed practice were detailed on the case. And strange as it may seem, the amateur medics, with the kindly assistance of a few internes, succeeded in putting Heinz's works together so well that nearly everything matched up and there were but two or three minor fragments left over.

When Heinz had become able, the doctors had let him out for a few hours each day to take a little exercise through the corridors, and thus it was that he wandered away from the regular halls and into our department.

We did not know all this until later, however, for as our department, that of dentistry, is located in a wing removed from the general hospital, we see very little of the patients except those brought to us for treatment.

"Gee, what is it?" whispered Richards, my co-worker, when Heinz pushed his revamped anatomy into our midst and got off the aforementioned bit of scrambled talk.

"If you guess right you can have it," I replied lightly and went on polishing my favorite yell producer.

"Did you want some work done?" asked Richards, in that honey and mush tone he employs while strapping his victim in the chair and telling him it will not hurt one bit.

Heinz merely let out a couple more lengths of smile and nodded yes and no.

"Write it out for him," I suggested.

"If he can't understand plain English, how the deuce can he read it?" asked Richards, trying to stab me with a look.

"That's right," I admitted. "Why don't you draw him a picture of it, then?"

"A picture of what?"

"I don't know."

"Aw, shut up," said my ungrateful friend, and turned to the patient.

"Sprecken ze Dutch," he told him, and got a shake of the head and some more Chessy-cat grin.

"Polly voo the gay Paree," said Richards, after thinking a while, and this got him a stare of polite spissitude followed by another all-encompassing grin.

"Hi yah, sub gub yakamee no checkee no washee," I put in playfully and received as much encouragement as Richards.

"It gets me," muttered my fellow worker as he surveyed the expansive smile in bewilderment. "He must be something or other. He looks like a bear."

"No, he isn't a bear," I stated positively. I had seen several bears. "He looks something like John."

"That's the first sensible idea I ever heard you exprèss," congratulated Richards. "Send for John, while I watch it."

"Sure, sure," I replied without knowing what he meant. "That was a fine idea; great head." And I pushed the Turkish janitor's call button.

After a few minutes John, the Turk, appeared and I then discovered what my great idea was.

"John, we sent for you to act as interpreter," said Richards. "This gentleman is a foreigner and we thought perhaps you could find out and tell us what he wants."

John looked the other over carefully for a moment and then let loose a collection of sounds which were so much like our victim's warble that I knew at once the two must be near relatives. When John got it all out, however, and Heinz put on that wide smile and began to shake his head I began to feel discouraged and wanted to go home. Richards looked grieved, too, and John seemed disappointed, but recovered almost at once and a peculiar look came to his face; a look that made a juvenile shiver scoot up my spinal column without any reason whatever.

The Turkish janitor's eyes narrowed, he leaned toward the other and spoke a few words which sounded like a saw striking a knot. Immediately Heinz's smile reappeared, but accompanied this time by a vigorous nodding of the head, and the next moment we were pulling John off the patient and trying to find out what in Hades had happened.

"Him—Bulgarian," yelled the Turk, after he had ceased to struggle. "My brother—him get kill las' week! Bulgarians kill him—I kill Bulgarian!"

Things were looking brighter every moment now and the prospects for a first-class murder never seemed better, but after we had sat on the vengeful Turk a while, talked to him as a couple fathers, shook some light of understanding into his head, showed him why it was neither advisable nor polite to indulge in miscellaneous murder at this time and gave him two perfectly good dollars, he consented to postpone the killing until some future date and we let him up.

"Now, John," coaxed Richards, "we've got to find out what he wants and you are our only hope. Please, John, ask him just this one little question, and after we get through with him you can kill him all you like."

John was stubborn but finally persuaded, and shot a sizzling query at the patient. Immediately came the answer and even yet that vast stretch of grin lingered. Nothing could wipe that out.

"What does he say?" we asked eagerly.

The janitor stood a moment puzzled. Then he glanced over the room and a look of genuine mirth showed through the generous coat of engine grease and coal dust on his face.

"No understand him," he said, and we knew he lied, but the next moment he was gone.

"Well, I'll be danged!" said Richards, and sat down suddenly.

"On two," I replied, and mopped my brow.

And then, like a bright light shining through the darkness, Heinz arose, crossed over to the dental chair, seated himself, pointed to the tools lying about and rubbed the side of his face.

"Aw, why didn't we think of it before," growled my partner. "Of course, he has something the matter with his teeth or he wouldn't come here. All we need do is examine his grinders, find what is wrong and fix it. A good dentist doesn't have to be told what the trouble is. Gee, we are a couple of nuts."

So Richards set out to discover something. All doubt had now vanished from his mind; he was master of the situation; again down to his calm, collected self and operating at his profession.

In a very businesslike manner he pried the victim's jaws apart and looked in.

"Dirty," he muttered. "I'll clean them up first so I can see what they look like."

It was a skillful operation and quickly performed. When finished Heinz looked in the mirror, grinned at himself and noted that his features had been improved. Then he grinned at Richards and nodded his head to show that all was going well, but on second thought looked serious, almost astonished, and again rubbed his face.

"Uh-huh, toothache?" said Richards, nodded his head at the patient and rubbed his own face in reply.

"Pretty soft," he said to himself, "pretty soft," and began sorting over his tools of torture, while I sneaked around and proceeded to secure a firm grip on Heinz's system.

There are few faces in use at the present time which do not contain at least one tooth which should be extracted or fixed, if you take the dentist's word for it, and when Richards discovered that one of Heinz's molars contained a small decayed spot, we decided at once that it was the source of trouble and proceeded to punish it accordingly. And the wild yell which our patient emitted immediately thereafter is still spoken of by neighbors in the vicinity and it is said to have shaken several sparrows out of the drain pipes on nearby houses. But we got the tooth.

When I say there is little more to tell I realize that the story seems to end rather abruptly, but even so, I speak the truth and must adhere to facts.

Before closing, however, I might mention that Heinz went through our door like an electric shock and was never seen thereafter, and the only light cast upon the mystery was furnished by the Turkish janitor when he stopped in to see us the next day.

"Been thinkin'," he said. "Just figure out what dam' Bulgarian want. He stop here and see nice tools, see lookin' glass, see big chairs and he think it is barber shop. Him want shave. Jus' figure him out."

Then with a sad smile John departed and left us to our thoughts. We certainly had not shaved him, but we had jerked out one of his teeth!

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The Diamond Eye

(Continued from page six.)

it slipped from his hands and fell with a crash to the hard pavement.

In the dim light of the alley, he saw something bright and flashing roll across the pavement. It was the diamond—rich, sparkling, and glinting! He made a desperate dive for it, and came in violent collision with the dark form. There was a snarl like an enraged animal. The two hands grasped for the diamond, but neither touched it. The precious stone continued to roll along, and disappeared in the gutter.

Mark attempted to throw off his assailant and spring for the gutter, but once more a blow was landed on his head. This time it did not glance sideways, but hit him squarely. He went down before it like an ox felled for the shambles. He scarcely had time to see stars before total darkness obscured his world. He rolled over in the gutter inert as a log, and apparently dead.

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* * *

He Overdid It.

After he had fallen upon his knees and kissed her hand she said:

"Before I answer, 'Yes' or 'No,' there are some things I would like to ask you. Do you ever drink or gamble?"

"No," he eagerly replied. "I do not know what the taste of liquor is. I have never defiled my lips with tobacco. I have never uttered a profane word in my life. I have never even played bridge where a prize was at stake."

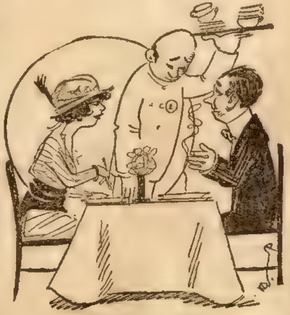
She looked at him thoughtfully for a moment, drew a long sigh, and then asked:

"Have you ever broken a woman's heart?"

"Ah, how can you ask me that?" he almost reproachfully answered. "If I had ever spoken words of love to another I would not deem myself worthy to touch the hem of your garment. I have never cared for any one but you. I have never kissed any woman except my mother. I have never given any girl cause to utter one sorrowful sigh. Yours is the first dear, soft, little hand that I have ever held in my own. Never before tonight have I looked into any girl's eyes as I am looking into your deep, soulful eyes. Never——"

"Oh, dear," she impatiently interrupted, drawing her hand away from him, "it's after eight o'clock, and you shouldn't be so far away from home at this time of night. Wait a minute, please, and I'll see if I can't get my brother, Tom, to go with you. Your mama must be terribly worried."

* * *



"It looks like rain, sir."

"The soup may look like rain, waiter, but it is too thin for that."

* * *

His Terrible Past.

"Don't ask me to tell you the reason," the young man begged.

"But," the beautiful girl replied, "it isn't fair to me to let the matter drop without a full explanation. I have chosen my bridesmaids and told my friends of our engagement. They will not be satisfied to be informed merely that you consider yourself unworthy of me. They will think that you don't care for me and have merely wanted an excuse for throwing me over."

"I know. You can tell them anything you like. Tell them it was you who threw me over."

"They will want to know why."

"You can say that you didn't love me."

"No, Clarence, I can't tell them that. It would not be right. I do love you."

"Please don't ask me for the truth. It is too horrible."

"Clarence! Is it something in your past life?"

"No, Clarissa, it is not that. I have tried to be worthy. I have made a brave effort to keep myself free from the vices that drag so many young men down to destruction. I have told you all about my own past that there is to tell."

"Then I insist upon knowing why you wish to release me from my promise."

"Please, darling, have mercy."

"I must know the truth."

"Very well, but you will be sorry when I have told you that you have been so cruel. I have just found out that my father was once a chorus man in a musical comedy."

With a shudder she turned away from him, wondering how one so noble could have had such an origin.

* * *

Lively Dog.

"Did you ever have a dog in the family?" asked Bildo. "We did recently. How that dog got into the family I don't know. Each member of the household went around saying 'I am sorry they got that dog!' by the time we had him a week.

"There was never any way of telling who was responsible for his presence with us. No one claimed the credit of it.

"We disposed of him because he took a piece out of a man's trousers. It was a peddler's trousers. It is a bad thing to let a dog bite a peddler.

"The peddler stormed up to my door a day or so after the event and informed me that he had been in the hospital a week and that I must pay his hospital expenses, also his doctor's bill, also for the time he had lost from his vocation, also for the pants which my dog had ruined.

"When I asked to see his receipts from the hospital and doctor, he offered to compromise on my paying five dollars for the damage done his trousers. I offered to pay the five, but insisted on immediate delivery of the garments.

"He was unable to deliver the goods, so it cost me nothing. Still, it was a narrow escape, and I decided that I had better either acquire a lawyer or get rid of the dog.

"While I was pondering a man went by all dressed up in a beetle-tailed coat, with white gloves on like a pallbearer ready to dance the tango, and the dog fell for him. The apples in the Garden of Eden didn't look near as good to Adam as that man did to my dog, and he got a chunk out of the black legs of that man.

"The tango dancer had a fiery disposition and what he proposed was not to sue, but to lick the owner of the dog immediately. This made me very uncomfortable, indeed. I hid in the cellar until the storm blew over.

"We got a muzzle for the dog after that and then he scratched up the neighbors' geraniums. We consoled ourselves that he was a good watch dog, anyway, but one night a burglar got into the house and stepped on him, and that scared the creature so badly that we had to let him sleep in the bed with us after that.

"We tried keeping him in the shed, but he dug out in the night, and after announcing his presence by licking us on the face he crawled in with us, fleas and muddy feet and all.

"So we had to get rid of him."

* * *

Her Third.

A New York lawyer tells of an English widow who, by reason of certain legal complications found it necessary to retain an eminent attorney to represent her in the adjustment of her late husband's estate.

"You will," said the attorney during the consultation, "you will get your third out of the estate."

"Oh!" exclaimed the widow, aghast, "how can you say such a thing, with my second scarcely cold in his grave!"

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Tan or Liver Spots positively removed by using Stillman's Freckle Cream. Prepared for one purpose only—*clearing the skin.* If you have freckles, write us today for our Free Booklet "*Wouldst Thou Be Fair?*" Stillman's Cream is sold by most druggists, 50c a jar, or direct from us, same price, prepaid. Write now. We can help you.

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Real Hair Grower Found at Last!

The Great English Discovery "Crystolis" "Grows Hair in 30 Days."

$1000.00 Reward If We Fail on Our Guarantee. Try It at Our Risk. Mail Coupon To-day

Beautiful Hair and lots of it—if you use Crystolis.

Here's good news at last for men and women whose hair is falling, who are growing bald and gray, whose scalps are covered with dandruff that nothing seems to keep away and whose heads itch like mad.

Good news even for those who imagine themselves hopelessly and incurably bald or who suffer from hair or scalp trouble of any kind.

We have secured the sole American rights for the great English discovery, Crystolis, the new hair remedy that in Europe has been called the most wonderful discovery of the century, having been awarded Gold Medals at the big Paris and Brussels Expositions.

Already, since securing the American rights hundreds of men and women have written us to tell of phenomenal results obtained by its use. People who have been bald for years tell how they now glory in their beautiful hair. Others who have had dandruff all their lives say they have now a clean, healthy scalp and that hair stopped falling after a few applications of this wonderful new treatment.

We don't care whether you are bothered with falling hair, prematurely gray hair; matted hair or stringy hair; dandruff, itching scalp, or any or all forms of hair trouble, we want you to try "CRYSTOLIS," at our risk.

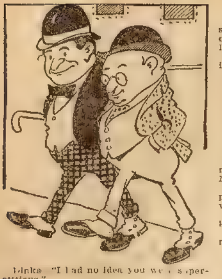
We give you a binding guarantee, without any "strings" or red tape, that it won't cost you a cent if we do not prove to you that "Crystolis" will do all we claim for it, and what's important, we have plenty of money to back our guarantee. We have deposited $1,000 in our local Bank as a special fund to be forfeited if we fail to comply with this contract. Cut out the coupon below and mail it today to Creslo Laboratories, 100- Street, Binghamton, N. Y.

FREE COUPON

The Creslo Laboratories, 100-H Street,
Binghamton, N. Y.

I am a reader of Boyce's Weeklies. Prove to me without cost how Crystolis stops falling hair, banishes dandruff and itching scalps and restores gray and faded hair to natural color. Write your name and address plainly and

ENCLOSE THIS COUPON WITH YOUR LETTER



Dinks—"I had no idea you were superstitious."

Winks—"I'm not."

Dinks—"But you were carrying a horseshoe when you entered the ball park yesterday."

Winks—"Oh! that was to heave at the umpire in case he got gay."

A Good Attendance.

Sidney Smith, once entering a drawingroom alone in a fashionable mansion in the west end of London, found it lined with mirrors on all four sides. Finding himself reflected in every direction, he remarked

"Ah. I see. There appears to be a meeting of the clergy here and there seems to be a very respectable attendance!"

The Poor Sphinx.

A schoolteacher in one of our country schools was reading sentences to her class, letting the children supply the last word.

"The Sphinx," she said "has eyes, but it cannot ——"

"See!" replied the children.

"Has ears, but it cannot——"

"Hear," they said.

"Has a mouth, but it cannot——"

"Eat," said the class

"Has a nose but it cannot——"

"Wipe it!" they said in chorus.

Couldn't Tell.

Here is the latest story of one of the most popular after dinner speakers of New York

"There was a little boy who was badly puzzled over the theory of evolution. He went to his mother and asked

"'Mamma, am I descended from a monkey?'

"'I don't know,' she answered. 'I never met your father's people.'"

A Change of Family Essential.

Old Roxleigh—"Marry my daughter? Why, you are supported by your father."

Suitor—"Yes, sir, but my guv'nor is tired of supporting me, he says, and I thought I'd get into another family."

Evil Anticipations.

"Why are you crying, my little boy?"

"'Cos I don't want to go to school."

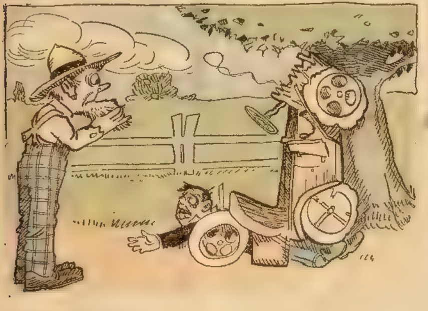
"But why not?"

"'Cos sister jilted the schoolmaster last night."

What the City Breeds.

Her Mistress—"Have you given the goldfish any fresh water today, Mary?"

Mary—"No, mum. They ain't drank all the water I gave them the other day yet, mum."—London Sketch.



Farmer—"Accident?"

Motorist—"No! Just sick of the car!"

To the Point.

A lawyer residing in Washington, and noted for his laconic style of expression, sent the following terse and witty note to a refractory client who would not comply with his reiterated demands for the payment of his bill.

"Sir: If you pay the inclosed you will oblige me. If you do not I shall oblige you."

Proof Positive.

Merchant—"Have you collected that bill of Smith's?"

Collector—"Have I collected it? I called at the house and found that seven Smiths lived there. Six declared they owed nothing, and the seventh kicked me out of the house."

Merchant—"That's the one. Go back and get the money."

The Usual Result.

An old negro went into a drug store in Richmond and said

"Boss, will you please, suh, call de colonel on de telephone?"

This was done and the old darky said

"Colonel, dat ar mule done stull right in de main street right out here in front of de store. Yaas, suh; I done tied strings round his ears, but he didn't budge. What's dat? What's dat? Yaas, suh, I build a fire under him, but it didn't do nuthin' but scorch de harness. Yaas, suh; yaas, suh, I took de things out, but he wouldn't budge. Yaas, suh, yaas, suh. What's dat? No, suh, no, suh, Colonel, I didn't twist his tail. Yaas, suh, yaas, suh; another gemman twis' his tail; he look like a Northern gemman. What's dat, Colonel? Yaas, suh, dey tuk him to de hospital."

Rather Noisy.

Mrs. Marsden's only recommendation to society was the great wealth left her by an uncle.

"I attended the new theater last evening," she announced to a member of the smart set whom she happened to meet one morning.

"Indeed," said the social leader. "How are the acoustics of that theater?"

"The what?" queried Mrs. Marsden.

"The acoustic properties," replied the other woman.

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Marsden quickly—"the acoustic properties. Why, do you know, it struck me they were rather gaudy."

Why Knock?

Mrs. Ellsworth had a new colored maid. One morning, as the maid came downstairs, the mistress said "Emma, did you knock at Miss Flora's door when I sent you up with her breakfast?"

"No, ma'am," replied the maid, with preternatural gravity. "What was de use of a-knockin' at her do' w'en I knowed fo' sure she was in dar?"

An Authority.

"A man told me today that there is as much nourishment in a nickel's worth of peanuts as there is in a pound of steak," said the old fogy.

"Who was he? A scientist?" asked the wise guy.

"No," replied the old fogy. "He was a peanut merchant."

No Friends.

Paying Teller—"You must get someone to identify you before I can pay this check. Have you any friends in this town?"

Stranger—"Not one. I'm the dog catcher."

The Whole Family.

Little Miss Muffet,
She sat on a tuffet,
Hoping her sweetheart would stay;
But along came her mother,
Her father and brother,
And frightened her suitor away.

The Only Way to Do It.

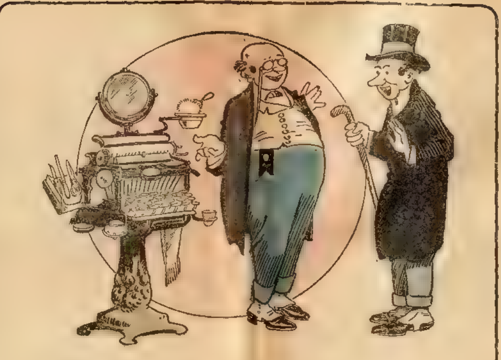
"Willie, you've been fighting again, after I warned you not to."

"Yes, ma'am. If you really want to keep me from fighting I guess you'd better go out and warn Jimmy Green not to make me mad again."

Reported Convalescence.

"Aren't you the man I gave some pie to a fortnight ago?"

"Yes, lady, thank you; I come back because I thought p'a'aps you'd like to know I'm able to get about again."



Billers—"This typewriter will revolutionize the industry."

Sellers—"How?"

Billers—"Look at the adjustable mirror, powder compartment, manicure set built in and chewing gum holder complete."

Modest.

"Who was that modest-looking young man, Cyrus?"

"Modest-looking? Say, what do you think he was?"

"I don't know."

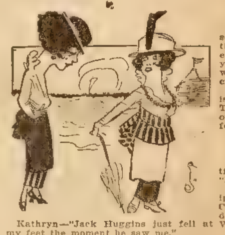
"He was a moving picture maker. All he wanted was to borrow our church for a mock marriage and then have a bogus shooting affray on the front steps."

On Both Sides.

George, the sexton's youngest, was recounting the prowess of his grandfather to Herbert, the rector's son, who was properly impressed, and asked:

"Your grandfather on your father's or mother's side?"

"Oh, he sticks up for both of 'em," said George.



Kathryn—"Jack Huggins just fell at my feet the moment he saw me."

Kittye—"Stumbled over them, I suppose."

Rehearsal.

A comedian spending the summer in Chicago took a flat close to a railroad which he surrendered after a week's occupancy.

"I think I could become used to the trains going by in the night," he said, "but every morning at eight two engines came under my window and rehearsed until noon."

Saving.

"George, my son, don't you think it is rather extravagant of you to eat butter with that delicious jam?"

"No, mother it is economical. The same piece of bread does for both."

Too Much.

Minister (baptizing baby)—"Name, please?"

Mother—"Philip Ferdinand Chesterfield Randolph Theodore William Sikes."

Minister (to his assistant)—"More water!"

His Fear.

A sad story is told by a Pennsylvania man of a lad in his town who, like many another boy, has been obliged to wear the cast-off clothing of his father.

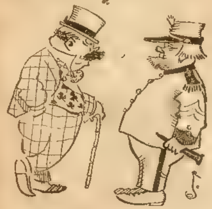
One afternoon this lad was discovered in tears. "What's the trouble, my boy?" asked the man who tells the story.

"Why," explained the youngster, between sobs, "pop has gone and shaved his face clean, and now I s'pose I'll have to wear them red whiskers."

A Practical Youth.

George—"If some one should leave you fifty thousand dollars, what would you do?"

Jack—"I'd run over to Europe, buy a title, and then come back and marry a millionheiress."



Mulcahey—"Your band was the worst in the parade. No snap to it—didn't let themselves out, you know."

Dinkelspeil—"No, dat pand's a prass pand, not an elastic pand, ain't it?"

Keeping the Sabbath.

Sir Archibald Geikie, the recipient of the Order of Merit, once told a story which illustrates one view of keeping the Sabbath in Scotland. Donald was mending a wheelbarrow at the bottom of his garden, and the noise shocked the Sabbath calm of the neighborhood. His wife came out with protestations

"Donald, mon, ye're making an' awfu' row. What wull the neebors think?"

Donald went on nailing a board on the barrow.

"I maun git ma barra mendit," he replied.

"Oh, but Donald," returned the good wife, "it's vera wrong to work on the Sabbath. Ye ought to use screws."

Making Amends.

Mrs. Housewife stalked indignantly into the baker's.

"Those currant buns you sent me yesterday afternoon——" she began heatedly.

"Nothing wrong, I hope, madam?" ventured the baker.

"Yes, there is. One of them had a dead fly in it in place of a currant."

"I'm most awfully sorry!" answered the baker earnestly. "I can't let a serious thing like this pass without doing something by way of reparation. If you will return me the fly, madam, I'll give you a currant in exchange!"

He Wasn't Sure.

"Won't you be very, very happy when your sentence is over?" cheerfully asked a woman of a convict in prison.

"I dunno, ma'am, I dunno," gloomily answered the man.

"You don't know?" asked the woman, amazed. "Why not?"

"I'm in for life."

Plain Talk.

"I have a damage suit against a railroad. Will you take my case on a contingent fee?"

"I had better send you to another lawyer, miss. I fear my charges would be too high. To be candid, you are not pretty enough to get over five hundred dollars, in my opinion."

Getting Used to the Change.

Her Father—"You assume a grave responsibility when you marry my daughter, sir. Remember, she was brought up in the lap of luxury."

Nervy Suitor—"Oh, she's pretty well used to my lap now."

Applying the Rule.

Employer—"Why did you take a whole day off yesterday? You only asked for half a day."

Clerk—"I remembered, sir, that you yourself told me never to do anything by halves."

His Trouble.

Hostess (to young guest)—"You won't have another piece of pie, Bobbie; why, you must be suffering from loss of appetite."

Bobbie—"No'm; I'm suffering from a promise to my mother."

How It Worked.

"Once a friend of mine and I agreed that it would be helpful for each of us to tell the other his faults."

"How did it work?"

"We haven't spoken for nine years."

What He Did.

"He lost his head."

"What happened?"

"Later he made a lot of excuses to save his face."

Bad for the Laurels.

William Dean Howells, according to the Washington Star, was admonishing a young novelist, who, after writing a fine novel, had produced only slight commercial things.

"Two critics," he said to the young man, "were discussing a certain author.

"'His laurels,' said the first critic, 'already seem faded and bedraggled.'

"'That,' the other critic agreed, 'is because he has been resting on them.'"

A Mother's Satire.

A mother sent this somewhat satirical note to the teacher of her small son

"Pardon me for calling your attention to the fact that you have pulled Johnnie's right ear until it is getting longer than the other. Please pull his left ear for a while and oblige his mother."

BREAKING WINDOWS.

"Almost every town owns,"
Said the suffragette lass,
"There are sermons in stones
"When you throw 'em through glass."

A Matrimonial Bank Account.

"You keep a joint bank account with your wife, do you not?"

"Yes, I deposit the money and she draws it out."

The Owner in Peril.

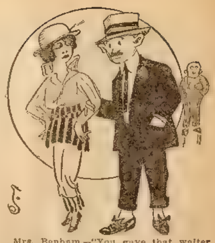
"What's most liable to get broke about your automobile?"

"The owner," replied Mr. Chuggins.

Still in Danger.

"Is the patient out of danger yet?"

"Well, not altogether. The trained nurse is still with him."



Mrs. Benham—"You gave that waiter for a tip more than you paid the minister when we were married."

Benham—"But I got a good meal."

A Shrewd Boy.

"Willie," whispered auntie, in the street car, "why don't you get up and give your seat to your father? Doesn't it pain you to see him reaching for the strap?"

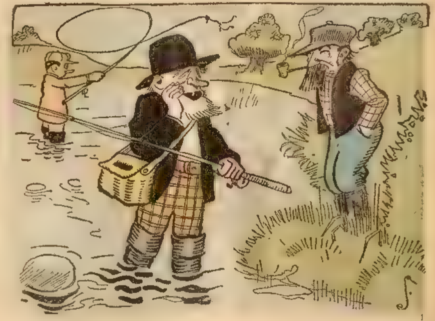
"Not in a car," responded the youngster, settling back comfortably in his seat.

Advertising Pays.

"Does advertising pay? I lost a five-dollar bill on the street."

"Well?"

"I advertised, and so far I have received three five-dollar bills."



First Guide—"That blamed city dude hooked me in the whiskers."

Second Guide—"Gosh! Been shootin' us for years by mistake for deer and now hooking us by mistake for fish!"

Easily Remembered.

"Beg pardon, sir," observed the tough-looking waiter suggestively. "Gentlemen at this table usually—er—remember me, sir."

"I don't wonder," said the customer cordially. "That mug of yours would be hard to forget."

And he picked up his bill and strolled leisurely in the direction of the cashier.

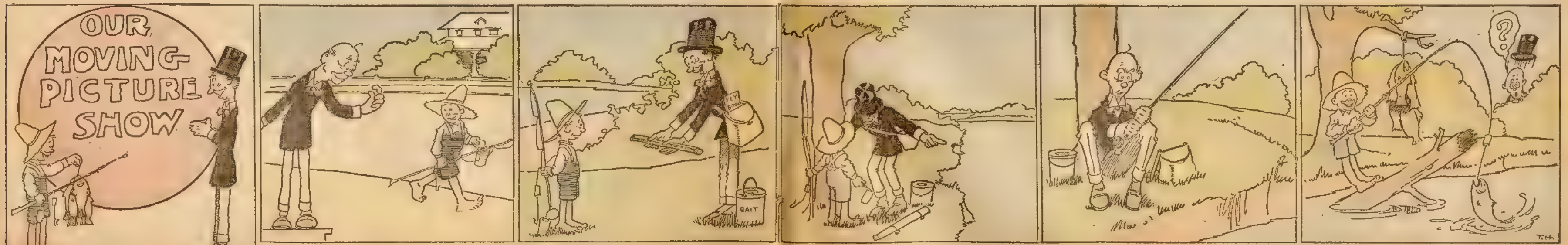
Mean.

Employer—"Good morning, Robert. I hope all your family are well this morning."

Office Boy (unsuspectingly)—"Yes, sir, thank you."

Employer—"I'm glad to hear it, Robert. There is to be a base ball game this afternoon, and I was afraid it might have a fatal effect on some of them."

A TRUE FISH STORY



The Professor—"Wait a moment, little boy, and I will accompany you. I will be glad to show you the scientific method of catching fish

First, always provide yourself with the very best equipment, because very often one's success depends upon the quality of one's tools.

'Now, my deductions tell me that this is a likely spot. You run along and find a place for yourself.

"Four hours and not even a nibble! I've tried all the best scientifically proven bait and not a 'rise!' Guess I'll see how my little friend is succeeding."

The Kid—"The Prof. may know all about the theory of baitin' suckers, but I reckon I know how ter catch 'em, by cracky!

Mad Magic Afloat

Or, THE SHIP OF ILL OMEN

By William H. Manning

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE CAPTAIN AGAIN.

IN A moment I was armed, and Trayol stood firm by my side. In the mixed twilight and moonlight the men who had invaded the ravine were clear to our eyes, and we equally so to them.

"Hello, Jerry, my lad!" came in a well-remembered, bantering voice. "Get the table set and pile on food, will you? Prove yourself the best steward in the wide land!"

Captain Torrington was smiling upon us, with Mate Barton and five sailors at his back. If unwelcome, they were not cannibals.

"Where do you come from?" I demanded curtly.

"From the sea, Jerry. We are castaway mariners, though the Gak-el-Zinto, in spite of some raffle on deck, is still afloat."

"And the other passengers?" Althea asked quickly.

"Your servant, Miss Leerick," and Torrington removed his hat courteously. "I delight in saying that the good Hannah, your maid, is safe and well. I dare say Poindexter and his bosom friend are the same, and they are secure in their staterooms. They are charming men!" and the old sneer had its course.

"You shall hear all," he pursued abruptly. "The ship went aground, but she took the water again with the next sea. Barton got her canvas under gaskets, managed to navigate yonder group of islands, and somewhere among them she now lies at anchor."

"But," interrupted Althea, "why are you here?"

"For humanity's sake. Five sailors, a first-class steward, and a lady passenger were missing. We have found but you two."

"We can answer for three of the sailors, for they lie drowned, done to death by the sea that boarded us," I explained. "The others may have fared as ill."

"Doubtless."

"Am I to understand," Althea inquired, "that you are here to take us back to the Gak-el-Zinto?"

"In time, in time," the captain replied, the words falling slowly. "I told Emerson not to look for us tonight, and it's such wretched work poking about among the islands that I'll do as I said. We will all stay here until daybreak."

He waved his hand toward Trayol.

"At a rough guess," he continued, "the mysterious stowaway."

"Yes," I admitted. "He and I have sworn an alliance."

'Capital! You have a positive genius for alliances. We will camp with you. Barton, sit down! Hearts of oak, do likewise. Drop!"

Every man seated himself, and all with an air of weariness. The Phorga slipped around to their rear and melted with the night, but he stayed near enough to be of service if needed.

The captain had it his own way. I was too much perplexed to give consent or to refuse it, so we settled down together. The sailors produced an ample supply of food for a large party, and as the newcomers ate, Althea and I drew apart for private speech.

"What do you make of this?" I demanded. "Why do they decline returning to their ship tonight?"

"There is something he has not told," he replied promptly.

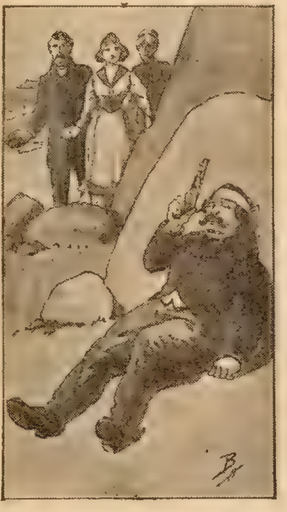
"What is it?"

"I cannot guess. Is the ship lost, or has there been mutiny?"

"My suspicion is, mutiny. No man ever knew both the captain and the chief mate to accompany a party searching for persons missing from their vessel. Anything of that sort violates shipboard ethics."

"Can it be that Ildrik has tried his magic spell again, and won the crew over, and that they have set these men adrift?"

"I would like to think so, but, frankly, with the feel of land under my feet, I have less faith in magic than when helpless in the Gak-el-Zinto. That hardly seems to explain to my satisfaction."



Sitting with his back to the rock.

"Something has gone wrong with Torrington."

"Yes, but what?"

We could not guess it, and as time was valuable we soon hurried on to another point.

"Suppose," I said, "that, in the morning, we have chance to return to the ship? Shall we go? You know how we were placed when aboard of her. On the other hand, here is this coast, probably alive with natives who may be cannibals——"

"Oh! Mr. Harding, don't, don't!" she implored. "Bad as matters were on board, we cannot hesitate. No other horror in the world can be compared with falling into the power of the blacks, and what else would be before us, if left here?"

"Your reply is the only one possible," I admitted soberly, "but if we must choose I'll have it out with Torrington before we go on board. I shall demand two revolvers, and his oath to use us with decency——"

"Jerry," called the captain, lightly, "don't remain too long in the full rays of the moon. It is bad for the complexion of stewards."

"Don't reply!" whispered Althea. "Don't quarrel with him at any time before the great crisis."

It was good advice, and I followed it. When eating was over with, Torrington produced cigars for all, and we sat and smoked for two hours, with Torrington bantering nearly every one but Althea. She, barred from indulgence in the fragrant weed, sat a little apart, and I noticed with satisfaction that Trayol rested behind her like a faithful dog.

In the presence of the wretches from the vessel, the Phorga assumed new importance in my eyes. Feeling that he could be relied upon to aid me in a time of trouble, he grew into a guardian spirit and loyal friend. It was cheering to my heart to see his dusky figure back of the girl.

As the night drew on toward bedtime, we gave heed to it. Althea retired to her hut. Trayol and I took recumbent position near the bush-screened door, and the captain and his men cast themselves down here and there, close at hand. The earth was again dry, and grass furnished our beds.

By right I should have lain awake in worried thought, but I was almost helplessly sleepy and weary. Succumbing early, I trod hard upon the borders of unconsciousness, and then, for the first time in hours, remembered the natives who had walked on the mainland ridge.

I had not mentioned them to Torrington, because, in the pressure of other thoughts, I had forgotten them until now. Remembering, I had a half-active moment of anxiety, but I was too far gone to sense the need of the night.

All hands went to sleep without a single sentinel to watch for danger. In the face of this negligence the to-be-expected happened.

I came out of slumber in a panic. The ravine was in an uproar. Numerous men were there now, and the moon fell upon black faces, war-clubs, and other weapons. We were attacked by the natives.

Overwhelming as their numbers were, they were not having it all their own way. Torrington and his men were firing rapidly, and swarthy foemen were falling here and there. One glance I took at this, and then I sprang to the door of the hut to defend Althea. Trayol was already there.

"Together, serah!' he cried, his voice ringing like a bell.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE MAN ON THE ROCK.

WE GAVE them a fight worth seeing. Before Torrington came, I had, in the lack of better weapons, made a huge pile of stones the size of my fist upon a rock that lifted its head to the height of my waist hard by the door of the hut. These stones were my implements of war, and as I hurled them, one after the other, straight into the faces of the natives, who struggled to get at us, they were really terrible weapons. There could be no missing at such close quarters, and practically every stone found a black head and did awful execution.

Trayol—how I loved the man that night! Just how he fought I do not know, for his roughly-made weapons were as perplexing as ever to me, but I do know that, perhaps forgetting to try magic, he was a bulwark of defense by my side, and an animate engine of destruction. He was, indeed, athrill with animation, if not with enthusiasm, and as he fought, his clear, cheerful cries had much to do with keeping my courage up to the high mark. The blacks could not get at our backs, so we held our position.

In the open Torrington and his men did wonders, but when their pistols were emptied they had only sheath-knives to fall back upon, and they availed little against the war-clubs of the Africans. Twice I heard the captain urge all hands to get their backs to the wall, as ours were, but they were surrounded.

Their fight could have but one end-

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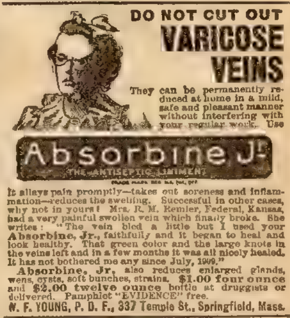

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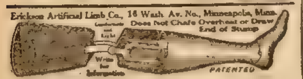

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ing. The end came. As the little handful grew fewer the entire party of natives were abruptly drawn to that point as wolves turn upon a wounded, flagging deer.

There was another moment of strife and then—astonishing fact—our trio were alone in the ravine. The Gak-el-Zinto survivors had broken through and fled, and every swarthy foe was at their heels. Trayol grasped my arm with slender fingers that gripped like bands of steel.

"This is our time, serahl!" he sibilated. "They will soon be back. We must run and hide."

"Now, now!" came Althea's voice like an echo.

I had been vaguely aware that not all the stone missiles had been hurled by me. The wonderful girl was there, brave, fighting for her life, surprisingly cool in the crisis.

I caught her hand, and with the Phorga guarding the rear, we fled from that shocking ravine. I knew we left white men there with fallen blacks, but it was no time to pause and render them the sometime duty of the quick to the dead.

There was no immediate pursuit, and we raced on until the north waters lay before us. There we found the best nook we could discover, and there we passed the rest of the night. For an hour we heard the Africans, and once they came within twenty feet of our refuge, but we remained unseen and, after that, all signs of them ended. It is not pleasant to dwell upon the suspense of those hours of darkness, and I pass our natural terrors by briefly.

As soon as the day dawned, Trayol went to reconnoiter, returning with the tidings that no blacks remained on the island. Then we left the refuge. Leaving Althea at a little distance, I visited the scene of the fight. There, together with the fallen natives, I found Barton and two sailors. Death had been instantaneous.

Something almost like a frenzy was upon me to get away from that accursed strip of land, and we started a search for dry wood from which to construct a raft for Althea, while Trayol and I swam to another island. It was an ill-considered plan, since it would expose us as we crossed the strait, but the idea was strong for the moment.

Searching, we came to another bit of a ravine, and there we had a surprise. Captain Torrington was sitting with his back to a rock.

First view was enough to reveal the fact that he was not the old Torrington. His formerly upright figure was drooping, and his full-colored face was turned into the white that is so nerve-rending to see in the sorely afflicted. We had a brief view of him before we were seen in return, and I noted the grimness of his powerful face and the fact that his hands tightly grasped a pistol. Then he discovered us, and the ghost of his old smile moved his ashen features.

"Well, well, Jerry!" he scoffed, "is it breakfast time so soon? Pots and kettles heated, filled and emptied, and the hour for the deft hand of my model steward? Set the table, Jerry, lad!"

I walked to his side.

"Things have gone ill with you, Torrington," I replied, not ungently.

"A wound in my head and a broken leg. Twice, and out, so to speak. The tyrant of the Gak-el-Zinto has met his deserts, and now there are none so poor as to do him honor. Gone the ship, gone the crew! The mutilated captain is left."

I had seen the bandaged head at the start, and now I took heed to a bandaged leg.

"How did you manage to escape with such severe hurts?" I asked.

"The broken leg came after I and one of the sailors, Shaw, succeeded in getting away from the blacks. I tumbled over a small cliff, and the bone broke while we were still dangerously near the enemy. That moment developed a hero. His name was Shaw!"

He paused and indicated a pile of green boughs a few feet distant.

"Under that humble cover," he resumed, "lies a sailor heart of oak. Shaw was terribly wounded, but he picked me up bodily and ran with me in his arms—a full hundred yards. Here, right here, his overtaxed energies failed him. A blood vessel, probably connected with his wound, gave way. In a half-minute he was gone. I dragged my broken leg after me, covered him with the green branches, and then lifted my hulk to this position. Here I have sat, one shot at my disposal. Had an African come I should have robbed him of the pleasure of torturing me."

I had never before heard so much expressed in few words. He thrilled me with the recital, and transformed himself from a despicable foe into a mere suffering man, stubborn in his new purposes, marvelous in his energy, revealed in unexpected colors by his act in covering the sailor.

"Word shall at once be sent to the ship, and surgical aid brought for you. I think I have heard it said that Emerson is no mean doctor."

"He smiled wanly.

"Jerry, the Gak-el-Zinto is a memory, and no more. Ship and crew have deserted."

"What?"

"Either your friend Poindexter has won the sailors over, or Emerson has abandoned me on his own initiative. The ship has sailed away."

I glanced at Althea, dumb with alarm. If this statement was true, she and our little band were in even worse plight than the wounded captain. We lacked the shots necessary to take our own lives, and the blacks were sure to come again.

"You see," Torrington went on, "we were in that group of islands over there, and we wanted to get away. Soundings showed that though we had met with such blind good luck when we drove in among them, we had a large chance to go aground in the shallows if we tried to get out and fetch to the sea. Barton was for lowering a rowboat and finding sufficiently deep water, and it was my idiotic impulse to go with him. You see, I trusted Emerson. Barton demurred, I insisted, and I went."

He paused, smiled again feebly, and shook his head.

"'Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad,'" he quoted. "This time they wanted Torrington! Well, we rowed here and there, between this island and that, hither and yon, wrapped up in our soundings. When we finally found water deep enough for our purpose we rowed back. The Gak-el-Zinto was gone. A mile away we saw her standing out to sea, her yards white with canvas, a fair wind on her beam. We were abandoned!"

He paused again and lit a cigar A few puffs he took, and then his stomach visibly rebelled. He cast the weed away.

"Jerry, lad," he added, and his voice had the old, humorous ring. "I wanted to fetch to the coast of Africa, and I am here."

It was a terribly significant reminder, when we recalled his cruel purpose against Poindexter, and I was silent.

"Let's balance the books an atom," he continued calmly. "At any moment the natives may appear, or my aching head may wag along into delirium. The dead and the delirious cannot tell things exactly right. Just now, I can. You have wondered why you where shanghaied into the Gak-el-Zinto."

"Yes," I agreed.

"Very simple. A few hours before we were ready to sail it was found that our cook had not showed up. He was addicted to liquor, and we argued the usual way. I took one man in a cab and set out to find him. We failed. We were in a dilemma. A cook must be had, at once, and I decided that we must kidnap him. But whom were we to get? My man told me a club-house was near where evening dinners were eaten. We went that way, saw you cooking and believed that to be your actual calling, waited until you came out, and then seized upon you. At the very last moment before sailing our regular cook appeared, but you were on our hands. We dared not liberate you, so we took you along, and I made you steward, sending the man slated for that work into the forecastle. Very simple, is it not, Mr. Harding?"

Have I not said that the man who knows how to cook possesses a fatal art? When I filled in at the club-house, that eventful night, I laid the foundation for all this adventure on my part.

"Perhaps," interrupted Althea, "you will explain why I was kidnaped?"

"I could slay the man who was responsible for it!" snapped Torrington, angrily. "When you were hunting for your uncle's ship, you encountered my deck watchman, a fellow full of liquor and misguided humor. It came to him that it would be a capital joke on me to get you on board the Gak-el-Zinto, so he assured you that my ship was the one you desired. I did not know of your presence until morning, when we were well out to sea. As in Harding's case, I dared not let you leave us. There was too much sin afoot that would be found out quickly. I wanted no pursuing Government vessel hammering away at my craft with cannon."

Again it was very simple, but Althea and I looked at each other rather blankly. We had never guesed the truth.

"Another thrilling point," Torrington said, smiling dimly. "I am no sea captain. I have sailed thousands of leagues in various oceans, but only as passenger. I cannot navigate a ship nor give orders fluently to shorten sail. I know the compass from the trestle-trees, and the main sky-sail from the mizzen-royal, and that's about all. On this voyage I have seen fit to pose as captain, but you must have noticed that my mates made the observations, and that I was a figurehead. I wonder if any of my fallen sailors happen to have a flask of whisky in a pocket? I am—getting—a bit faint!"

I turned to ask Trayol to make a search, only to see him staring away from us with excitement in his manner.

"Look, look!" he cried in excitement.

I faced as he indicated, and saw the Gak-el-Zinto standing toward the island.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THOSE WHO SAILED.

WE WERE not abandoned. The ship was fetching to land, and her deck held persons who gazed our way intently. Althea's hand stole impulsively into mine, and we gazed in happy silence. Certain that the Gak-el-Zinto had changed hands, and feeling that we need not fear as long as Torrington was

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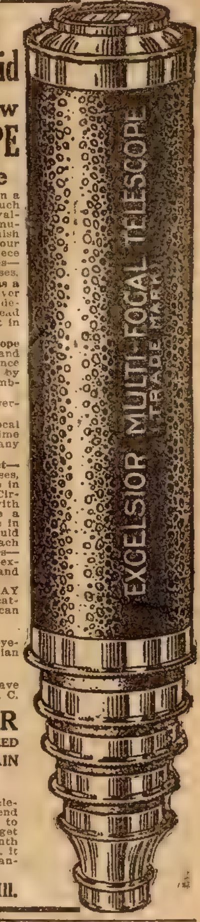

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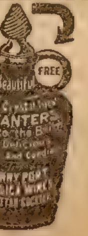


so gravely wounded, we foresaw the end of our troubles. Then the captain's voice broke in upon the lull in husky tones.

"Perhaps the leopard had not changed his spots," he half whispered, "but if he comes to see the tiger he will—find his—claws drawn!"

There was a gasp, and Torrington was in a faint. Then woman's supreme part in the plan of creation became manifest, and the sin-laden head was quickly upon Althea's shoulder. Equally alert, Trayol was hastening away to find a possible flask.

Presently I detected a sea-glass bearing upon us, with Poindexter's spare figure back of it, and I waved my hand wildly. He motioned in return, and his freedom of action was not to be mistaken. After all, the leopard—if Torrington meant Emerson—had changed his spots.

The ship drew closer, was brought to, and presently a boat neared the island. Poindexter came in the stern, and I met him immediately after the bows slivered on the land. Our hands met warmly.

"Did you think," he asked hurriedly, "that we had abandoned you?"

"I did not know where the Gak-el-Zinto was," I replied, prudently evasive. "If I had known, I would never have doubted you."

"It was necessary to run out to sea a bit. We were among that nest of islands, waiting to learn of a safe passage where we would not go aground in shallows, when a swarm of black men approached us in boats. We had just time to clap on sails and, taking risks, thread the nearest channel we could find. We unexpectedly found water enough for our draught. To stay would have been madness, for the natives would have butchered all hands. Once at sea I prevailed upon Emerson to act a decent part for a few hours, so I have been practically master of the ship. It is only temporary—though Ildrik has consulted his Trail of Life and affirms that all our troubles are over with. I forgot to say that when we sailed we had to abandon Torrington and Barton, who were away in a boat. We shall have to pick them up, but I have secured weapons and there will be a stiff fight before we accept imprisonment again."

He had talked too fast for me to interrupt.

"Suppose," I suggested, "that Barton was dead and Torrington was badly wounded?"

"Then we could work our will, for Emerson has really weakened."

I conducted him to where the captain reclined unconscious in Althea's merciful arms. He was to be excused for mistaking that pallor and drooping immobility for death. One long look Poindexter took, and then he turned impulsively to me.

"This man," he announced, "was my cousin!"

I murmured something vaguely to the point.

"So the end came on the coast of Africa," he pursued. "Yes, within forty miles of Cape Foulface, where he thought to do me to death. He always hated me, though formerly without definite cause. We were both born to riches, both addicted to world-wide wanderings, until he saw fit to settle down a year or so ago. I returned home for a visit to find him trying to be a candidate for Congress. I knew what others did not, that his entire life had been evil, lawless, and repulsive, and I thought it my duty to tell. I told, and he was rejected by the voters. Because of that he kidnaped me and tried to hand me over to the men who live near Foulface. Judge between us! Still, only I can say just what his fair exterior really covers."

At that moment Trayol slipped back soft-footed, a flask in his hands. I took it and poured a quantity of spirits into Torrington's mouth.

When I rose I saw Trayol on his knees at the feet of Ildrik, who had noiselessly approached. There was nothing servile in my ally's manner, but simply deference; and as I noted the Dahbi's grave calm I felt that he would do Trayol justice.

Ten minutes later the Phorga was standing alone, happiness in his expression, while Ildrik was seated on the earth, guiding the course of the indicator in the Trail of Life. I went to him.

"Trayol," I said, "has aided me bravely and splendidly. I ask your good will for him."

"And I add my desire to the same effect," said Althea.

The Dahbi gazed at us benignly.

"The Phorga," he replied, "has taken human life, but I know from previous report that he was greatly excusable. The man he slew was ill thought of in the Menloav Islands. He fled to the United States, found himself threatened by one of his countrymen who knew, so he hid himself in the ship. He would go to India, and it shall be so. His heart is not bad."

"We are glad," added Althea, "for we owe him much. And how, prince, does the Trail of Life foretell our own future?"

"The vitalized rider moves very readily among the heavenly bodies, which is a guarantee that we are to meet with no future trouble. Be at your ease—the lesser heavens have spoken!"

An impatient hail showed that Emerson was alert. He motioned, and, looking east, we saw semi-naked men moving along the mainland ridge.

"We must go," I said, hurriedly approaching where Torrington lay in stupor. "Poindexter, of course you command here."

"As you will, Harding. It will be weeks before this stricken man can work mischief, or even get on his feet. We will not imitate him—if he recovers he shall have life and liberty."

I remembered Cape Foulface, but was glad to hear the decision. After all, Torrington was a being created in the form of a man.

The sailors who had come with the captain to the island had all fallen in the fight with the blacks, so, with everybody accounted for, we went aboard, where Althea's maid received us rapturously. As soon as the sailors could trim the sails anew, we filled and stood away from the coast. Althea and I lingered in the after part of the deck until the hostile land dimmed and blurred, glad to see the water pulsing between ourselves and the Africans.

A council was at once held. Emerson, chastened by the situation, placed his services unreservedly at our disposal. After that Poindexter talked with the sailors, and though they remained dubious characters as men, their fast-following cheers told that the struggle was won.

Poindexter planned our immediate future. First of all we found and improved a chance to transship Trayol to an East Indiaman late from London, and I looked my last upon the friendly Phorga. Long since I had returned the dagger, and Ildrik gave him money at parting. I always regretted not having seen him try magic upon the Africans.

For a week we stood away under easy sail, hovering erratically in the regular course of merchant vessels. By that time we knew that Torrington, though still delirious, would live. Then, as the ship was his and the crew his men, we transferred ourselves to an American ship, the White Cap, Cape Town to New York, and bade farewell to the Gak-el-Zinto. Monsieur and the Professor, having done nothing ill, went with us. Our faces were toward home.

Somehow—such things are unexplainable, I think—it occurred to me before we reached land that I could not live without Althea as mistress of my home. By her mercy, I continued to live.

Poindexter and Ildrik resumed their wandering life together, but visited us every two or three years. Better friends I never knew. It was six years before anything was heard of Torrington. Then Poindexter brought news that the so-called captain had continued his sailing far and wide, but finally had espoused the cause of West India insurgents, and, in a rash endeavor, had, together with his crew and the Gak-el-Zinto, been blown into eternity by a powder mine.

The End.

* * *

At the Movies.

"Now, children," exclaimed Mrs. Plops, "I will not explain another single solitary thing about those moving pictures! You will have to ask your father."

"No," objected Plops. "They needn't ask father. If they do ask father he will immediately jump out of the window. Father refuses to be responsible for the doings of the people in those movies.

"It was your mother who proposed the expedition. I didn't. She said you would enjoy them so much, which was not true. Your poor little minds were never at rest from the beginning to the end. Nor were your mouths, nor your parents. Nor the parental minds, I might add. This thing of figuring how best to explain the pictures and make them clear to childish intellects was worse than any Chinese puzzle that was ever invented.

"Each time the hero changed his clothes he had to be identified as 'him,' and he was the most enthusiastic fellow for changing his clothes that I ever saw! If this picture was calculated to provoke kids to questions it was a success beyond the wildest dreams of the author and perpetrator thereof.

"'The bad man' went around in varying garb all the time and had to be identified, too. Funny that we had to spot him out when the people in the play couldn't do it.

"It was: 'Where's the little girl now?' 'Oh, is the little girl grown up?' 'Where's the little girl's mother?' 'How do you know she's dead?' 'If I were her I wouldn't hug that old geek!' 'Is he her father?' 'How do you know?' 'Is he a convict?' 'What's a convict?' 'Did he steal something?' 'What makes everybody think he did?'

"Those were corkers of questions! I'll never go to a moving picture performance with a kid again!"

"Well," replied Mrs. Plops, "I answered more questions than you did, and didn't get cross about it, either. I don't mind answering them at the time or reading all the letters and notes and explaining them. But I had to answer questions all the way home. It was a very hard performance to explain, and I am perfectly exhausted. And now that we are home they are still arguing about it."

"Let them argue," said Plops, "so long as they don't appeal to me. I think I know who the hero and heroine were, but when it comes to the parents and supposed parents of the entire bunch, I have no way of knowing. But I am open to conviction on any point in the whole infernal show."

* * *

A Good Sign.

Walking from Hope to Hayfield by a path over the moors, writes a correspondent of the Manchester Guardian, I found the hills covered with snow.

A freezing east wind made things anything but pleasant. At one point I had to admit that I had lost my way, and it was with relief that I found a signpost. The inscription was blotted out with frozen snow.

I climbed the post, and with great difficulty and personal discomfort thawed the snow off with my already half-frozen hand, and succeeded in deciphering the inscription. It said: "Keep to the path."

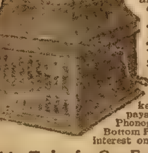
* * *

Gratitude.

A patronizing young nobleman was seated opposite the late James McNeill Whistler at dinner one evening. During a lull in the conversation he adjusted his monocle and leaned forward toward the artist.

"Aw, y' know, Mr. Whistler, he drawled. "I pahssed your house this mawning."

"Thank you," said Whistler, quietly. "Thank you very much."



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Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1886, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879

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COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

Gems of thought are often only paste.

A mean man isn't always a man of means.

We all get our start in life by picking up ideas.

A closed mouth may be the noblest work of man.

Some musicians put on more airs than they can play.

If a wife is unable to reign she is likely to storm.

There's nothing so gloriously uncertain as a sure thing.

It is better to be disappointed in love than in marriage.

Half the truth may cause more trouble than a whole lie.

The setting hen may be a loafer, but she delivers the goods.

The man who gets the most of it seldom gets the best of it.

Better a fool who knows nothing than one who knows too much.

Every time a wise man makes a mistake he learns something.

Some genius may yet be able to make breakfast food of wild oats.

A woman seldom nags her husband unless he is that kind of husband.

Two women can get along well together if they hate the same people.

Some things come to those who wait, but especially if they are not vaccinated.

Among the poor ways of making one's mark in the world is painting the town red.

Remember, girls, that a handy man is better than a handsome one for domestic use.

Somebody ought to devote a few minutes to feeling sorry for a married man who can't think of a good excuse at the right time.

After the newly made husband has settled with the parson he might as well keep his pocketbook in his hand, for that is merely the beginning.

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PEPPERS

Up and Doing.

On the levee at New Orleans a negro truckman and a white truckman had words about the right of way for their respective teams. The white man halted his mules, jumped down from his wagon and made a rush for where the darky was perched, still jawing. He grabbed the negro by the leg, yanked him off his seat, hit him a stunning blow before he ever touched the earth, and in twenty seconds had whipped him soundly and was back on his own wagon driving away.

A policeman hurried up. The victim still lay on the ground dazed, bleeding, and gazing up at the sky with his one undamaged eye.

"What's the matter here, man?" demanded the officer, shaking the prostrate and battered darky by the shoulder.

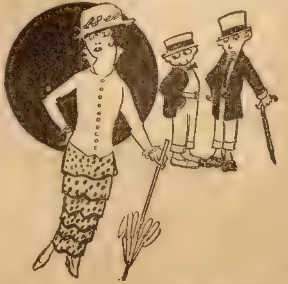
"A w'ite man done beat me up!" explained the negro.

"Who was he?"

"Dunno, boss—I never seen him befoah."

"Well, then, describe him!" insisted the policeman. "What did he look like?"

"Boss," confessed the negro, "hit wuz all over so quick I didn't git a good look at him; but say, boss, you won't have no trouble findin' him—he's de doin'est man dey is in dis whole town!"



Howell—"How did she get your goat?"
Powell—"Making sheep's eyes at me."

Bismarck's Definition.

In the newspapers of today we very often find the words "entente cordiale." Most readers understand the meaning of the expression, but it is rather difficult to make a translation that expresses the exact meaning of the original French. Prince Bismarck gave a good explanation when his daughter asked him what the entente cordiale really was.

"Well," he said, "it is not so easy to define literally. It means a cordial understanding, but it also has a little different significance. For example: You were in the courtyard this morning when I came from the garden with Nero; Diana was in the yard, gnawing a large bone. My Nero saw her, and ran to seize the bone. Then there was a little fight, until I struck them a few sharp blows with my cane. After that the bone lay in the middle of the court, while both dogs stood off at some distance, and looked eagerly at it. Each dog, in fact, was as anxious to keep the other away as he was afraid of my cane, and therefore neither ventured to seize it. You see, that is what they call in diplomatic circles an entente cordiale."

Vocal Prowess.

Recently Brown met an intimate friend down at the sign of the goat, and as the conversation progressed the congenial pair inquired after each other's family.

"I understand, old man," said the friend, "that your wife has been taking singing lessons."

"Yes," replied Brown, "she got an idea in her head that it was up to her to wade in and make the operatic thrillers jealous."

"I see," rejoined the friend. "What do you think of her voice since it has been trained?"

"Well," smiled Brown, "I can't say that it is any better than it was, but there is certainly a whole lot more of it."

His Part.

A young society woman met a young man who was noted for trying to push his way into social circles.

"I am to give a little musicale next week," she said, "and I would like to have you take part, Mr. Williams. You know something about music, do you not?"

"Oh, yes, indeed," replied the young man, delighted, "and I shall be delighted, Mrs. Colt, I assure you. What part will you want me to take?"

"I should very much like," said the young woman, "to have you turn the leaves of the music at the piano."

Arbitrators at Work.

He was a member of the Peace Society, and he came across two youths in a Dublin back street fighting. Accordingly he rushed toward the boys and persuaded the combatants to desist.

"Let me beg of you, my good fellows, to settle your dispute by arbitration. Each of you choose half a dozen friends to arbitrate."

"Hurrah!" yelled the crowd. "Do as the gentleman says, boys!"

Having seen the arbitrators selected to the satisfaction of both sides, the man of peace went on his way, rejoicing in the thought of having once again prevailed upon brute force to yield to peaceful argument. Half an hour later he returned that way, and was horrified to find the whole street fighting, while in the distance police whistles could be heard blowing and police rushing to the spot from all quarters.

"Good gracious! What's the matter now?" asked the peacemaker of an onlooker.

"Shure, sorr," was the reply, "the arbitrators are at work!"

A Strange Coincidence.

Here is a story that was told by Congressman William M. Calder, of Brooklyn, when the conversation turned to strange coincidences.

Papa was sitting in the library one evening some time since, when his beautiful daughter happily rushed into the room, dropped upon his knee, and put her arms around his neck.

"Papa, dear," she blushingly cooed. "Harold was just here to see me. He wants me to marry him."

"He does, does he?" was the prompt and practical response of papa. "What's his income?"

"I don't know, papa," she said, and then thoughtfully added: "What a strange coincidence!"

"What do you mean by a 'strange coincidence,' Marie?" asked dad.

"Harold," answered Marie, "asked me the same question about your income."

The Magician Fooled.

We have been told the story of a professional magician who had recently been making one-night stands in little Ohio towns. The other night he was in Mount Gilead and he certainly made a great hit there. He had been performing for more than an hour and his audience was in great humor. The audience, in fact, was for him to a man, when he pulled a bad boy of the town to the stage. A big laugh followed.

The magician brought the lad to the footlights.

"Now, my boy," he said, "I want you to tell this audience that you are sure your pockets are empty."

"My pockets is empty," answered the lad, obediently. "De rabbit you told me to put in me coat got away."

Hiding the Worst.

"We miss President Wilson's quiet and trenchant wit sadly here at Princeton," said an instructor in Greek.

"I remember, at one of President Wilson's receptions, I complained of a man who boasted of his bad habits.

"'When a man,' said the President, 'boasts of his bad habits, you may rest assured that they're the best he has.'"

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Her Rest.

"What you need is rest," declared Spicer. "You've had this headache for a week. You've taken every old woman remedy known until it's a wonder you're not in a hospital. You've listened to everybody but your husband, who knows all there is to know about a headache. You've seen me with hummers, and you know that my infallible remedy is—rest! Now, today I'm going to see that you do rest. I'm not going to the office, and you're going to stay in bed."

"But it's Saturday," objected Mrs. Spicer. "How do you expect me to have a rest with Tommy home and that Johnson youngster coming over to play?"

"If that's all that worries you," beamed Mr. Spicer, "forget it! I'll fix the children."

"Then," wailed Mrs. Spicer, "there's the marketing—Gibbs will be calling up——"

"Keep on fretting! If you women aren't the limit! Don't you think I'm capable of running the house for one day? Lie back, and—don't worry. I'll have a tempting breakfast up here in a jiffy."

Mrs. Spicer pillowed her throbbing head. Certainly, it would be fine to stay in bed. Gratefully she heard her husband tell Tommy he must be very quiet.

She was dozing blissfully when Tommy called from the stairs: "Mother, father wants to know where the coffee is?"

"In the pantry in a can, on the second shelf, opposite the door."

In another moment: "Mother, father wants to know if it's a teaspoonful for each cup?"

"Goodness, no! A tablespoonful."

"A'right. Father says he'll have your breakfast in a minute."

For an hour Mrs. Spicer listened to him fussing over it. The pantry door banged times without number. With clinched hands she listened to the smashing of more than one piece of china. When he eventually appeared she had been sniffing something burning for ten minutes.

She merely glanced at the muddy coffee, scorched toast, and bacon swimming in grease. "I'm not hungry," said she. "There! there's some one banging on the back door. Run down quickly; it's that Johnson youngster, and he'll be into everything. And there's the telephone bell! That's Gibbs."

Spicer departed with the unappetizing food. In a moment he was back. "I—I wouldn't bother you, but Gibbs has a new butcher. Gibbs himself is not in the store. The new clown doesn't know beans! How many ribs do you usually get in a roast?"

"Two, when we're alone. There goes the front door bell, and somebody's hammering at the back door again. What are those youngsters doing?"

With a muttered, 'How in thunder can a fellow do business at both doors at once?" Spicer bounced out of the room, calling back: "Cut out your worrying! I've sent the youngsters to Johnson's!"

But Mrs. Spicer heard them playing in the front room. She was on the point of dressing when Spicer again loomed up.

I've settled Gibbs," said he, "but there's a man at the back door who tells me you ordered eggs from him, and a woman at the front who wants to see you about castoff clothing for the Ladies' Aid."

"Are you thinking of bringing her up here?" ironically asked Mrs. Spicer. "For pity's sake, couldn't you have told her I'd see her Monday? And—take the eggs and pay for them! It doesn't require much brain power to solve that problem, does it?" With a groan she burrowed her head in a pillow.' Spicer reflected as he stalked out that a slight illness plays the deuce with a woman's temper.

There was a lull for a few blissful moments. Evidently the children had been packed off. Mrs. Spicer settled herself for rest. Of a sudden she heard Mrs. Johnson's voice in the kitchen. It would be just like her to come upstairs! And the bedroom was a perfect sight! She heard her say: "Tell her it's a sure cure." In a moment Spicer appeared at the bedside, bottle in hand.

"Mrs. Johnson wants me to rub your head with this liniment. She says—Now, see here, I know I'm set against this homemade dope, but I couldn't throw it in the woman's face, could I?"

An hour later Mrs. Spicer was having her first rest that day, when the telephone bell rang again. It did not disturb her particularly, she was so sleepy. She turned over wearily, incurious as to the conversation below. She was slipping into the land of Nod when——

"That was my sister Mary," exclaimed Spicer. "Oh, were you sleeping? Now, that's too bad——"

"Your sister Mary—go on!"

"She's coming to town tomorrow, with mother and Tom and James. They'll be here for dinner."

"How charming! With a two-rib roast in the house and nothing else that I know of except eggs."

'I'll attend to that," soothingly. "I'm going to the barber shop now. On my way back I'll stop at Gibbs'."

Mrs. Spicer sat up suddenly. "All right. Hurry on to the barber's."

Spicer followed directions.

"Gee whiz! You downstairs cooking dinner? And Gibbs told me you'd ordered!" Spicer was one vast smile, as he stood in the kitchen doorway. "I say, you look fine! You have a dandy color. Didn't I tell you a rest was what you needed?"

Mrs. Spicer slanted one look at him. "The next time you want to try your infallible remedy on me, John Spicer, send for an ambulance and take me to a sanitarium."

* * *

If women ever break into the political game they'll either have to learn to handle a hammer or hire some cheap men to nail campaign lies for them.

The Bar Scores.

The story in a recent Companion of a Scottish lawyer's clever repartee to an English judge has reminded one of our readers of a similar encounter in which North Britain came out ahead.

As in the other case, the lawyer was Scotch and the judge was English. The case in argument concerned certain water rights, and the lawyer had frequently to use the word "water," which he pronounced very broad.

"Mr. So-and-So," at last interrupted the judge, "do you spell water with two t's in your country?"

"Na, na, my lord," quickly retorted the lawyer, "but we spell manners wi' twa n's!"

* * *

It Depends.

Lady Cook (Tennessee Claflin) was talking in Pittsburgh about time's changes.

"Woman used to wear the hoopskirt," she said, "and the wind blew it up outrageously. She now wears the slashed skirt, a much more modest affair.

"Time changes all things," ended Lady Cook. "I said to a young man the other day:

" 'Distance lends enchantment.'

" 'But not,' he answered, 'when you're taking your girl home in a taxicab.' "

* * *

A Trade Trick.

"Stop!" thundered the client at the barber, who was cutting his hair. Then, he continued, in somewhat milder tones:

"Why do you insist upon telling me these horrible, blood-curdling stories of ghosts and robbers while you are cutting my hair?"

"I'm very sorry, sir," replied the barber, "but, you see, when I tell stories like that to my clients, their hair stands on end, and it makes it ever so much easier to cut."

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THE FAIRY CORNER

TIGER'S SECRET

It was such a comfy room, that library. No wonder Betty liked best to curl up in the great leather armchair for her afternoon nap! She was like a little queen on a throne, for the sunbeams, creeping through the high lattice window, lit up her yellow hair like a golden crown. Then they crept out through the other high, lattice window to join the rest of the sunbeams outdoors. Sunbeams, you see, did not have to take naps!

"Go to sleep, darling," called mother's voice from the hallway, after the door closed.

"I—don't—want—to sleep!"

Betty sat up straight in her armchair throne. She was wider awake than she had ever been before. Then her eyes nearly popped out of her head, for what do you think stood before her? A fairy! A real, story-book fairy, with curly hair, a fluffy, spangled dress and a sure enough wand. Now, Betty had heard of fairies all the four years of her life, and so instead of being badly scared, she smiled.

The fairy stepped up on the table and seated herself on the inkstand; then she looked at the shelves of books, which went all around the room on two sides and joined the huge fireplace.

"Why don't you want to go to sleep?' she asked softly.

"I want to play," cried Betty. "And there's nobody here to play with me!"

It was a wonderful room. Betty's father was a mighty hunter. Right over the mantel was a great brown head of a deer—a caribou he called it. At the sides were two heads of an elk and a moose. On top of the low bookcase were stuffed animals, squirrels and mink and a little white ermine. Then the birds! Some hung on plaques on the walls—little quail and wild ducks and others. A great big eagle with wings outstretched was in one corner of the room. Right down on the floor in front of the fire was a royal tiger skin, all gold and brown stripes. And other rugs lay about on the shiny floor. Why, it was a perfectly wonderful place for Betty to go to sleep in!

"Nobody here to play with!" echoed the little fairy. Then she jumped down to the floor and waved her wand three times.

"Tingle, tangle, tingle, tee!
Come to life and play with me!"

She sang the little song while Betty stared until her blue eyes nearly popped out of her head. Then what do you think happened?

The great eagle flapped his wings and flew over to the other corner. The royal tiger rose slowly to his four feet and opened his huge mouth in a big yawn. Meanwhile, a great black bear sat up on the floor and began licking his paws. The elk and the caribou and the moose shook their horns and came down from their places on the walls. All the little squirrels and mink and ermine on top of the bookshelves ran up and down until they either jumped to the floor or stopped to talk to each other.

"Oh-h!" cried Betty, happily, clapping her hands.

Then a great game began. The royal tiger picked up father's gold-headed cane and acted as ringmaster. He was wonderful; he lashed his tail and made the other animals dance around the room, jump over each other's backs, and do all sorts of tricks. Betty sat still as a mouse beside the little fairy and watched with happy eyes. Father's animals were the grandest playmates in the world.

Suddenly every dancing animal stood still in its tracks. The fairy sprang to the table and waved her wand three times.

"Tingle, tangle, tingle, tack!
To your places get you back!"

In a flash over the fireplace jumped the caribou; at his side, the elk and the moose. The old grizzly bear stretched him down on the floor quite flat. The eagle flew to his corner. All the tiny creatures on the bookcases ran to their places. And the fairy—well, she just flew out of the window on a sunbeam. By the time the footsteps reached the door the room looked just as it had before the fairy came.

"Still sleepy, darling?" called mother from the doorway.

Betty sat up in the armchair. "Oh, I've had the grandest play!" she cried. "They all played with me."

"Played with you?" began the mother.

The royal tiger on the floor before the fire winked a shiny eye at Betty, as if to say: "That's our secret and the fairy's."

But mother did not wait for an answer. She held a yellow paper in her hand all crumpled up. "We shall tell father all about it," she cried, happily; "he is coming home tonight."

Then Betty thought the little animals knew all about it and had been dancing for his return.

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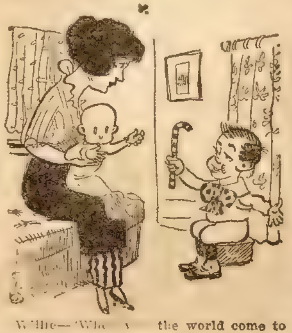

Willie—"When will the world come to an end, mamma?"

Mother—"Nobody knows, dear!"

Willie—"Hadn't I best eat my candy cane at once and be on the safe side?"

❧

P. P. P. P. P. POKE AND HIS PRIDE.

Peter Paul Praxiteles
  Phineas Peleg Poke
Thought manhood only attainable
  By learning to strut and smoke.
Now little Praxiteles Paul
  Phineas Peleg Peter
Was usually considered
  Quite an omnivorous eater
But the fumes of the smoke
  And the taste of the weed
Made Peleg so ill,
  So seasick, indeed,
That he found it impossible
  Even to think
Of the ice cream to eat, and
  The soda to drink,
That his parents prepared
  For his eighth birthday party.
Remembering his appetite
  Healthy and hearty.
So Peter, poor Peter,
  Spent that day in bed
With pains in his jacket
  And aches in his head.
And now if you ask
  A small boy nicknamed Pete
If he won't smoke a bit,
  Just a bit for a treat,
He'll remember with sorrow
  That day when he tried
To smoke cigarettes
  Till he ruined his pride.

■

THREE BROTHERS.

There was once a man who had three sons, and no other possessions beyond the house in which he lived. Now, the father loved his three sons equally, so that he could not make up his mind which of them should have the house after his death, because he did not wish to favor any one more than the others. He did not want to sell the house, because it had belonged to his family for generations; otherwise he could have divided the money equally among them. At last an idea struck him, and he said to his sons: "You must all go out into the world and look about you, and each learn a trade, and then, when you return, whoever can produce the best masterpiece shall have the house."

It so happened that each found a good master, where he learned all that was necessary for his trade in the best possible way. The blacksmith had to shoe the king's horses, and thought to himself, "Without doubt the house will be yours!" The barber shaved the best men in the kingdom, and he, too, made sure that the house would be his. The fencing master received many a blow, but he set his teeth, and would not allow himself to be troubled by them, for he thought to himself, "If you are afraid of a blow you will never get the house."

When the appointed time had come the three brothers met once more, and they sat down and discussed the best opportunity of showing off their skill. Just then a hare came running across the field toward them. "Look!" said the barber, "here comes something in the nick of time." He seized basin and soap, made a lather while the hare was approaching, and then, as it ran at full tilt, shaved its mustaches without cutting it or injuring a single hair on its body.

"I like that very much indeed," said the father. "Unless the others exert themselves to the utmost the house will be yours."

Soon after they saw a man driving a carriage furiously toward them. "Now, father, you shall see what I can do"; said the blacksmith, and he sprang after the carriage, tore off the four shoes of the horse as it was going at the top of its speed, and shod it with four new ones without checking its pace.

"You are a clever fellow," said the father, "and know your trade as well as your brother. I really don't know to which of you I shall give the house."

Then the third son said, "Father, let me also show you something," and, as it was beginning to rain, he drew his sword and swung it in cross cuts above his head, so that not a drop fell on him, and the rain fell heavier and heavier, till at last it was coming down like a waterspout, but he swung his sword faster and faster, and kept as dry as if he were under cover.

When the father saw this he was astonished, and said, "You have produced the greatest masterpiece; the house is yours."

Both the other brothers were quite satisfied, and praised him, too, and as they were so fond of one another they all three remained at home and plied their trades, and as they were so experienced and skillful they earned a great deal of money. So they lived happily together.

❧

Profited by Instruction.

Young William received a new diary for a present and was encouraged by his mother to set down each day's doings.

The first day he wrate, "Got up at seven," and then continued to record incidents of the day.

On his mother's advice, he took it to his teacher for approval.

She criticised his first phrase. "Don't say 'Got up,' William," she said. "The sun doesn't get up; it rises."

Upon retiring that night William remembered his teacher's instructions, and wrote with much care in his diary: "Set at nine."

❧

Regamuende.

A city at the bottom of the sea was seen toward the end of October, 1888, near Treptow, in Prussia, when a powerful south wind blew the waters of the Baltic away from the shore, uncovering a part of the sand usually hidden by the waves.

It was the ruins of the city of Regamuende, once a flourishing commercial station, which was swallowed by the sea five centuries ago. The unusual sight was visible for only five hours, when the storm slackened, and the waves returned to cover up the place which had once been the home of human beings.

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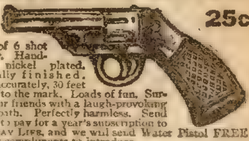

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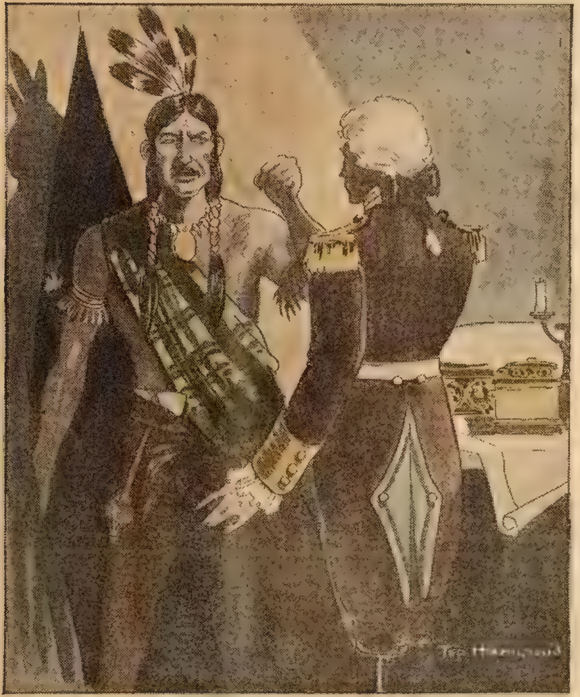

"He must go now!" roared the Shawnee

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CHAPTER VII.

FRYING PAN AND FIRE.

TO FALL into the clutches of a bear in the daytime is bad enough, but to be gripped in the dark by one of these forest monsters is more terrible still.

Ralph realized this when he found himself gripped by the hairy arms in the depths of the rayless cavern which he and his companions had sought after the startling surprise of old Set Trigger at the latter's campfire.

He let out a resounding appeal for help.

"Jes' as I expected!" cried the backwoods scout, springing forward. "The boy has made the acquaintance of 'Old Ephraim.'"

It promised to be a one-sided struggle, and Ralph's breath came and went in agonizing gasps. Once before he had had a tussle with a wounded bear, but then the advantage was somewhat on his side, and he had come off conqueror, but now——

He shuddered when he thought of his situation.

There was no fear in the heart of the frontier scout. He had wrested with all sorts of forest fiends, human and otherwise, and a bear had no terrors for him.

In a moment he had reached the scene of conflict and, fortunately finding bruin's throat, he bent the huge head back and plunged his hunting knife to the hard bone hilt into the shaggy side. Ralph felt the great paws loosen immediately. The growling animal fell off, and his bulk slid to the ground.

"I reckon," laughed Set Trigger, "that you don't keer to have another hug."

"Not of that sort," returned Ralph, wondering if his bones were unbroken. "You came in the nick of time, Set Trigger."

"Which I have a knack o' doin' when it's necessary. Thar may be more b'ars in the cave an' we'll jes' look around a bit."

The old man produced his tinder box, and in a few moments had a light which, to some extent, revealed their surroundings.

"I guess he was the only inhabitant," he observed, waving his improvised torch right and left. "Anyhow, it was better than tacklin' a hull passel o' Injuns."

"Infinitely better," consented Ralph, still white from his experience.

The long day waned at last, and Set Trigger, coming back from a survey of the front of the cavern, announced that night once more was casting her pall over the forest.

"We kin now proceed," he went on. "Proctor and Tecumseh are between us and the fort, and we're not goin' to invite 'em to an interview. We want to find out what's become o' the girls."

"That's the programme," said Paul, enthusiastically. "If they have fallen into the hands of the Indians, they are in danger. How foolish in them to stray from Fort Meigs at a time like this!"

"Oh, a girl's apt to do anything," commented Set Trigger. "They're always nosin' round till they git into danger. But we'll see if we kin strike their trail."

Guided by the old woodsman, the boys set off through the forest, stepping with the utmost caution, for perils lurked on every hand. All at once Set Trigger stopped and sent back a note of warning.

"We're on the fringe o' the camps," said he, in low tones. "They're doin' something over there."

By this time the light of a fire was observable, and voices came to the trio's ears.

"Thar they ar'!" ejaculated the old rifleman, pointing downward from the top of a knoll which they had reached.

The sight that greeted the border boys was enough to stir the most sluggish blood.

In the middle of a little forest basin more than fifty Indians were to be seen. The fire burning within the circle revealed the painted forms, and some were sitting on the ground while others were standing, all adorned with the paraphernalia of the warpath.

"Look! the girls!" almost gasped Ralph, clutching the old scout's arm.

"I see 'em, boy," was the low reply. "The red varmints ar' debatin' what to do with their prisoners."

On a blanket sat the two girls, arm in arm, and no doubt shuddering at the peril that menaced. Their pallid faces were easily detected, and Ralph and Paul looked with all eyes upon the scene.

"If we had a lot o' the men here there'd be something doin'," said Set Trigger, grating his teeth. "As it is, we'll have to wait."

"And see the girls butchered before our eyes?"

"They won't do that," observed the scout. "That big Injun who is doin' the talkin' is Black Adder, one o' the meanest o' them all. I once had the old varmint in my arms, but he slipped through like an eel. The next time——"

Set Trigger checked his own flow of language and continued to look.

The council broke up suddenly. The fair captives were jerked to their feet and hustled away with undue speed.

"Thar comes the cause o' the breakup," grinned Set Trigger, as a solitary figure drew into the ring of light. "It's Tecumseh himself, and the rascals were afraid to let him see the girls. Now I'll settle an old score with the Shawnee."

The click of a rifle lock was instantly heard, and Ralph threw out his hand and gripped the old scout's sleeve.

"Don't shoot the chief!" he cried. "We owe him our lives."

"But he leads the murderin' hordes," persisted Set Trigger.

"I know——"

"With him out o' the way the whole red set will desert Proctor."

"That may be, but we owe Tecumseh a debt of gratitude."

It was with ill grace that the scout lowered his weapon, for he growled audibly as he did so, and all continued to watch the Shawnee king. Tecumseh for a few minutes viewed his surroundings, and then turning on his heel sauntered off.

"I'll never git another chance like that," Set Trigger grunted. "If you boys warn't here thar'd be a dead Injun down thar."

The three now made a circle of the council fire, and approached the Indian camp from the right. The call of an owl came from the depths of the forest.

"The river is right over thar," said the scout, pointing away. "That was a signal. We'll jes' see what it means."

There was a dash forward, and in a few seconds the river was seen rippling in the moonbeams that struggled over the edge of a night cloud.

"What did I tell you?" cried Set Trigger. "They're takin' the girls across the stream."

A boat had shot out from the shadows. It was filled with Indians, and the girls were seen crouched in the stern.

"Kin you swim?" queried Set Trigger, swinging around to the breathless boys.

"Like ducks," answered Paul.

"Then foller me," and the old scout bolted off with the boys at his heels.

The woods that lined the bank of the Maumee screened them from observation, and they reached a point some distance below the slowly moving craft.

"Straight across," commanded Set Trigger, dropping into the placid water. "We must beat the reptiles to the other side."

All three swam close together with as little noise as possible and their heads resembled bobbing corks on the moonlit surface. They reached the other bank dripping, but in good spirits, and looked out upon the river and the lone boat.

"It's to be a dash," whispered Set Trigger. "Don't miss your men," and his trusty rifle clicked ominously.

In a few moments the prow of the boat touched the rushy bank. A giant Shawnee sprang out and pulled it forward. The girls were picked up without ceremony and carried ashore.

"Now!"

Three rifles cracked as one, and as many Indians fell back with death cries. The others stood paralyzed by the attack.

"Charge 'em!" rose the voice of Set Trigger, darting forward. "Give the varmints cold lead, boys!"

The onrushing trio seemed magnified into a regiment of backwoodsmen to the terrified savages, and all took to their heels. They left the boat to their foes and in an instant not an Indian was in sight.

"By Jupiter! this is luck!" exclaimed Set Trigger, appearing suddenly to the terrified captives. "We've got the boat, and now for the old fort!"

The boat was pushed out into the stream, the girls overjoyed at their rescue and trying to frame words of thanks.

"No thanks till you're out o' the woods," admonished Set Trigger, seizing a paddle. "We've got to run the water gantlet if I'm not mistaken."

Fort Meigs was a mile away, and the camps of the allied foes lined both shores.

"We'll keep in the middle o' the river," said the scout. "We've got to pass the gunboats, and if they heard our shots they'll be on the lookout."

It was not long before the unwieldy craft burst upon their vision.

"Down!" cried Set Trigger. "I guess I'm Injun enough to answer their hail," and as his command was obeyed, he paddled on with the composure of a veteran.

All at once the expected hail smote upon the ears of all. They were almost in the very shadow of one of the gunboats.

"Who goes there?" rang out the voice of a sentry on the deck.

Old Set Trigger gritted his teeth.

"Shawnee friends of the big white king," answered he.

Something splashed in the water to their right. A bullet hissed over the scout's head.

"It is a pale face's lie!" followed the shot, and two more balls sang past the boat.

"We're in pickle," said Set Trigger. "It's now life or death."

CHAPTER VIII.

BACK IN THE LAIR.

SECRECY, of course, was now thrown to the winds. The two girls dropped below the gunwale and awaited events. Concern was visible on the old scout's face, for the peril was extreme; the hulk of the British gunboat was plainly seen, as well as some commotion on deck.

"We shall have the Indians down upon us now," whispered Paul. "Ah, yonder they come to intercept us!" and both boys

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rose to their feet and prepared to receive the threatened attack.

"Come forward!" came from the gunboat. "If you resist we will blow you out of the water."

At this a grim smile overspread Set Trigger's countenance.

"I know that voice," said he. "That's the guard I overpowered when I spiked the guns. I'll wager my scalp they haven't drawn the nails yet," and then he threw a look toward the bank from which several canoes had darted.

"To the paddles!" he exclaimed. "We'll outwit the skunks yet, my young hearties!"

Dropping their weapons, Ralph and Paul bent to the long, lithe paddles, and the boat shot forward, straight toward the fort.

"You only court death!" was the next hail in clear tones. "Stop where you are, or take the consequences!"

"Blaze away!" answered the scout. "It's dollars to doughnuts that your guns are still spiked," and with this Set Trigger shook his bronze fists in stern defiance.

He was correct in his surmises that the boat near them was the one whose cannon he had rendered useless, and the commotion on her deck was only a ruse.

Meanwhile the Indian canoes were rapidly approaching. They were trying to get ahead of our friends, seeing which, Set Trigger suddenly dropped the paddle and picked up his gun.

"Here goes 'Liza Ann's compliments!" he sang out, and at the same moment be fired straight at the nearest boat, and a stalwart brave pitched over the side and disappeared in the moonlit water.

"Give it to 'em!" he called to the boys, and they were not slow in following his example. Their shots told as his had done, and the canoe came to a sudden halt.

Instead of clearing the way to the fort, the danger was only increased, for three boats loaded to the gunwales with painted redskins, darted at them and rapidly closed in.

"The jig's up," growled the imperturbable old borderer. "We can't fight the whole Shawnee nation."

"What! do we have to surrender?" cried Ralph.

"Looks that way."

"But the girls?"

"We're all in one pickle," interrupted Set Trigger. "If I war alone I'd make a dash for it, but I'm not the man to abandon you all."

The yelling savages now surrounded the boat. Set Trigger eyed them with the mien of a cornered wolf, still grasping his rifle, which he had hastily reloaded. The race for life was at an end. There was no escape from the doom that impended.

"Keep a stiff upper lip," commanded the scout. "I've got out o' bad scrapes afore now and——"

His voice was drowned by the triumphant yells of the enemy. The boat was surrounded, and fifty savages were leering into the faces of the occupants. In another moment the craft was turned about and, escorted by the Shawnee canoes, the prisoners were forced down stream to doom.

The shots and the yells seemed to have aroused both camps. Figures were seen rushing down to the water's edge, eager to know what it all meant.

The little party was jerked from the boat without ceremony, and found themselves in the midst of a howling mob of redskins and white soldiers. Lucy and Nancy shrank from the glaring eyes, and turned pale when they canvassed the situation. Set Trigger bore himself like a hero. His tall figure towered above the heads of his captors, and now and then he smiled as he returned the looks of the foe.

"Back to the old perils," said Ralph, in low tones to Paul. "We did the best we could, and that is some consolation. I hope we won't see Tecumseh, for really we broke our parole."

"Never mind the parole," returned Paul. "I half believe Tecumseh gave us rope intending that we should escape."

"He's the only Indian in the whole lot that seems to have a heart."

When the main camp of the British was reached, it was astir. Believing that the shots meant a sortie from Fort Meigs, Proctor had ordered out his command, and the prisoners found the whole army under arms.

The British General himself stood in the light of a fire waiting for the captives. At sight of Set Trigger his eyes flashed and he laid his hand on his sword.

"Who are you?" he demanded in the voice of a lion.

"I'm Set Trigger, General," was the reply. "In other words, I'm the Yankee that spiked your guns."

"It was a mean, dastardly trick, sir."

"But all's fair in war, General. You should be thankful that I didn't drink all your toddy."

"Take them away!" thundered Proctor, waving his hand at the little group. "I'll settle with them when morning comes."

"Why not now?" shouted a voice, and Simon Girty sprang into view. "That old rascal is as full of tricks as a dog is of fleas."

General Proctor frowned.

"Turn him over to me, General," pleaded the renegade. "Let me and the Indians have a chance at Set Trigger, and I'll warrant you that he won't spike any more guns."

"I command here, sir!" sternly answered Proctor, who secretly despised the man who was fighting against his own race. "Take the prisoners away, I say, and see that they are well guarded," and with this he turned abruptly on his heel and walked away.

"One moment!" cried Set Trigger, into whose heart the renegade's words had sank like heated steel. "Let me have a word with that reptile," and he strode forward until he stood within a few feet of Girty. "You miserable wretch! You are the meanest of all the vile things that crawl the ground. If I called my dog Simon Girty he would slink off into the woods and die. Your blood is a cur's, and you lost your human instincts, if you ever had any, when you were born. You will get your deserts one o' these days, and if they will clear a space for us now, you'll get them at once. You make war on women and children. You'd burn your own mother at the stake if she aided the Americans. Lower than all the snakes that crawl the sod is Simon Girty, murderer of the innocent, accursed of Heaven and doomed to die at the hand of some better man!"

Girty heard these scathing words with a pallid face. He trembled from head to foot, the sweat standing in great drops on his painted brow, and his eyes dropped before Set Trigger's fiery gaze.

"Don't touch me," continued the old scout, as Girty lurched forward. "You'd give me the plague. What, do you want this?" and the next instant a blow between the eyes sent the white Shawnee ten feet away.

The soldiers set up a shout of delight at Girty's discomfiture, and Set Trigger straightened with triumph.

The prisoners were now hurried away. The hut from which Ralph and Paul had escaped received them, and a strong guard was thrown around it. There was a bed of leaves in one corner and the wearied girls threw themselves upon it, embracing each other in their fears.

It seemed that the night would never end. Every now and then wild cries came to the captives' ears, and they knew that the Indians were still unappeased. They thirsted for blood, for tigers they were, and every once in a while the yells came closer, till the menaced ones believed that the hut was about to be attacked.

Not far away stood two figures just beyond the light of the campfires. Girty and the Prophet were holding a confab in low tones. The Prophet was gesticulating in his most furious manner, and the renegade was nodding assent.

"White man gag the Prophet!" hissed Elsktawawa. "He throw him into the lodge and leave him there while he helps the white boys to liberty."

"Yes, and he'll do that again, if he gets a chance," answered Girty. "I suppose you're going to let Tecumseh save them from the stake, eh?"

"All shall die!" was the rejoinder. "Tecumseh shall not interfere."

"He will come between if we don't balk him before morning. That brother of yours has a white man's heart, if he is Shawnee. Have you courage, Prophet?"

"Let Elsktawawa be tried, white brother."

"Then secretly assemble the Indians," advised the renegade. "Get at least one hundred together. We'll rush the hut. It will be over before Proctor or Tecumseh can intervene."

"What Girty says is good," cried the infamous red. "The Prophet will gather the braves."

"All good men, mind you."

"All strong braves," was the answer.

"And be quick about it. The guard is not very strong, only ten redcoats. We can sweep 'em away in a jiffy."

"It shall be done, but what is to be Elsktawawa's reward?"

"Anything you want."

"The Prophet wants one of the white maidens."

"You shall take your choice, Prophet. Simon Girty swears it!" and with a fiendish chuckle the Shawnee Prophet clasped the renegade's hand and bolted away.

CHAPTER IX.

BROTHER AGAINST BROTHER.

SIMON GIRTY and Elsktawawa, the Prophet, were well mated. In all the backwoods there were no more congenial spirits. Foremost in all meanness, shrinking from no act of cruelty, they were always ready to harass the unprotected settlements, and the borderers were unable to take the vengeance they justly longed for.

The agreement to "rush" the cabin where the captives were confined was in keeping with their brutish natures. One hundred Indians could easily overpower the guard which Proctor had placed about the hut, and once in their hands, Set Trigger and his companions would be shown no mercy.

The Prophet hastened to perform his part of the plot. This was not difficult, for he had a great influence over the Indians, and had but to broach his nefarious design.

Meantime Tecumseh, who was not as black as he had been painted, had guessed at the meaning of the whispering groups that gathered around his less gentle brother. Once or twice in his life he had tomahawked Indians who were killing prisoners, and his braves feared the vengeance of the great chief.

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Harrison was holding Fort Meigs so well against the allied foes that the British officer chafed under the failure of his plans.

Not long after the secret meeting of Girty and the Prophet, Tecumseh appeared suddenly in Proctor's tent. There was fire in the Shawnee's eye.

"We must dismiss the white renegade!" cried the chief. "He is a snake."

Proctor looked up astounded.

"If you mean Simon Girty," said he, getting his breath, "bad as he is, he's a thorn in the side of the Americans."

"But he wars on women and children," exclaimed Tecumseh, stamping his foot.

"That's his nature, chief——"

"It is the nature of the prowling panther," was the interruption. "It has come to this, white brother: If the renegade is not dismissed, Tecumseh will leave the camp."

This would never do. Proctor had information that a body of Kentuckians were advancing to reinforce Fort Meigs, and he had planned to cut it off and destroy it. Without Tecumseh's help he could never do this.

"We will wait till we have fallen upon the Kentuckians," temporized Proctor.

"He must go now!" roared the Shawnee. "The white snake must leave the camp before morning comes."

Proctor had to swallow his chagrin.

"What are all the yells I hear out yonder?" he suddenly exclaimed.

Tecumseh sprang back and tore aside the flaps of the tent. He listened for a moment in silence.

"They are attacking the cabin!" he cried, jerking his tomahawk from his belt and springing away. "The thundercloud has burst."

He was gone in an instant, and his figure leaping forward in the light of the campfires seemed to have wings.

It was true. The hated Prophet had collected more than one hundred half-naked savages, and the attack had begun. The guard had been swept away in a second, though a stout resistance was made.

Inside the darkened hut old Set Trigger had placed his back against the door. He had dug his heels into the ground, and with an expression of defiance on his face, was holding off the tigers that swarmed on the other side.

Ralph and Paul were aiding him with all their might, and the two girls, shuddering fearsomely in one corner of the hut, were clasped in each other's arms while their blood ran cold.

"I guess all the tigers are against us," said the old scout. "At least there are enough."

"But we won't let them in!" cried Ralph.

"We'll hold out to the bitter end," Paul coincided, as he tried to take new hope. "To yield is doom."

"Right you ar', lad," answered Set Trigger. "Whar is your boasted friend Tecumseh? It's dollars to doughnuts that he's out thar among the devils in red."

"I can't think it," returned Ralph, coming to Tecumseh's defense. "He saved us before——"

"For a purpose, no doubt. Ah! he's a wily redskin."

Again and again the foes outside sprang against the door in their madness, but those inside held them at bay.

"Girty is out thar," Set Trigger said. "I hear the varmint's voice eggin' on the wildcats."

The poor hinges of the door began to give. The whole cabin seemed to tremble beneath the fury of the assaults.

"What has become of the soldiers?" asked Paul.

"Oh, they've sneaked away to give the reds a better chance."

"But there is General Proctor?"

"What does Proctor care?" hissed the old man. "He's the same as a murderin' Indian in nature."

"Heavens! the door will fall with the next charge," Ralph gasped. "We can't keep those scarlet wolves out."

"They daren't give me a chance to fight 'em in the open," snarled Set Trigger. "No, they come in the night on murder bent and—but what's that?"

Above the din of fury arose a voice not heard before. It was not the voice of Simon Girty nor of the Shawnee Prophet.

"Back! back!" cried this voice. "Slink to your camp, warriors of the Shawnee nation. Are you wolves that you must always thirst for the blood of your foes? I am Tecumseh, chief of the Shawnees!"

"Ah, Tecumseh at last!" cried Ralph.

If the captives could have looked beyond the precincts of their prison they would have seen a sight calculated to thrill them. The Indians, headed by the Prophet, were disposed to continue the attack. Girty, hearing the voice of Tecumseh, had slunk to one side.

"The whites belong to Elsktawawa," said the Prophet, facing his lionlike brother. "They have killed our people and shall die like dogs."

In an instant Tecumseh swung round till he faced the one-eyed demon, who did not cower before his lightning look.

"They shall not die like rats in a trap!" he vociferated. "They shall not perish because Simon Girty wants their scalps. Where is the white-livered cur?"

Fain would the renegade have sunk into the earth rather than brave the fury of Tecumseh, but the eagle eye of the Shawnee singled him out. A bound carried the chief to where Girty stood.

"Go!" he thundered, pointing with one hand into the depths of the forest, whilst the other swung the tomahawk above his head. "Let the white serpent slink away before the hatchet of Tecumseh finds his skull. He is meaner than the babe-eating panther. Go!" and the hatchet almost touched Girty's face in one of its sweeping circles.

The renegade did not speak.

"Proctor shall not keep you," continued Tecumseh. "If you remain, not a Shawnee will be found for the King when the great battle comes. Will the snake crawl off?"

"The white brother is the Shawnee's friend," put in the Prophet, coming forward, but he was hurled back by the furious chief.

"Back to your camp, Shawnees! You shall not spill palefaces' blood tonight. The hunters come from the dark and bloody ground beyond the great river. You shall kill them, but not the people in the cabin."

One by one the baffled redskins slunk from the glare in Tecumseh's eyes.

"Some other time, brother," said the Prophet at Girty's side as he overtook the renegade. "They shall not escape us."

"That they shall not," assented Simon Girty. "And, what is more, I will have Tecumseh's life for his interference."

As the last savage disappeared, the Shawnee turned to the hut. The door was thrown open, and the inmates of the cabin saw his figure loom between them and the stars.

"The dogs won't bite again," said the chief. "White people safe from their teeth."

He stood in the doorway with folded arms.

"By glory! I think more o' you now!" cried Set Trigger, appearing before Tecumseh.

"White scout is always Tecumseh's foe," loftily answered the Shawnee.

"I guess you're about right."

"Tecumseh has no love for the pale-faced spy."

"I'll meet ye halfway when it comes to that," grinned Set Trigger. "But you certainly did us a favor tonight."

"Let the white man keep his thanks to himself," growled the Indian.

"Hang me ef I don't," replied Set Trigger.

With this Tecumseh turned suddenly and walked away. A dead silence fell about the cabin.

"It won't be long till morning now," said Paul. "Then, no doubt, we will know our doom."

"That's it," rejoined the lank scout. "Tecumseh has given us a breathing spell, that's all."

"The Prophet's minions would have butchered us like sheep."

"Yes, and what will Proctor do?" grated Set Trigger. "I tell you, boy, we're deep in the woods yet. I'm willin' to let 'em have my scalp if they will only give me a chance at Simon Girty and the Prophet," and the old man walked to the corner of the place, where he lapsed into moody silence.

The conclusion of this thrilling story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

* * *

Caught It, Too.

Uncle Eben was not what you might call a popular favorite in the village, but he always remembered which side of the bread carried the butter. Some unmarried women called Uncle Eben an old skinflint because he refused to pick one of them to share the profits of his one hundred acres of the best farm land in the valley.

For women Uncle Eben had an aversion that amounted to almost a horror. He said that any man who let any woman lead him by a halter ought to be put in the Home for the Feeble Minded. For forty years he had dodged them successfully, and liked to brag about it.

"Huh! you fellers are a lot of fools," he told the married men of his acquaintance when they rallied him upon his bachelorhood. "Why should I waste my savings on a woman? Too expensive a luxury for me," he declared. "First I know they'd have me buyin' an automobile or suthin'."

"I kin see you buyin' an autermobile," chuckled Bill Wolscrover.

"Too stingy to marry," was the verdict of the spinsters.

But Uncle Eben was the candy boy with his nephews and nieces, who knew the value of his farm and were ready to slice it into fat chunks the minute Uncle Eben had been laid to rest.

If Eben invited Nephew John and his family to spend their summer vacation on his farm, Henry and his brood of expectant heirs and heiresses retaliated by urging Uncle Eben to spend the Christmas holidays at their city home.

All the rest of the nephews and nieces enlisted in the battle royal, the loot of which was to be Uncle Eben's farm when he should have no more use for it.

Need it be mentioned that Eben kept a tight grip on the warranty deed and egged his relatives on to the battle? Anyway, he did.

It was William's turn to entertain Uncle Eben in the city. Eben fell for the tango the very first time they sprang it on him. Within a week he was taking tango lessons of one of William's daughters.

He contracted the habit of hanging about the cabarets and taking in "The Dansants." His relatives were not only jealous, but scandalized. They sent a delegation to William's house to protest to Eben against making a fool of himself.

Uncle Eben gave them the cold face and persisted in his "deviltry."

"Want me to hoof it back to the farm, do ye?" he asked. "Think your uncle's too aged to tango? I'm gettin' to be a gay old boy, eh? Well, this tango game suits me, an' I'm havin' the time o' my life. It beats the old kissin' games we used to have. I'm going to be a tangoer, 'f I break a leg and go busted."

When the time came for Uncle Eben to go back and wait on the cows and chickens, the farm didn't seem like home any more—without the tango.

He tried to start a tango class in the village, but the Epworth League and the Village Improvement Association combined against him.

It was a case of the farm without the tango or the tango without the farm—and Eben sold the farm. Within a month he was back in the city, staying at a gay hotel and touring the cabarets and the dances.

"Poor Uncle Eben's been touched," mourned the worried relatives. He had.

When Eben eventually introduced his nephews and nieces to his bride he casually mentioned that she was a demonstrator of the tango, and "the swellest dancer in the bunch."

* * *

Floored.

A crabbed old misogynist said to Ethel Barrymore at a dinner in Bar Harbor:

"Woman! Feminism! Suffrage! Bah! Why, there isn't a woman alive who wouldn't rather be beautiful than intelligent."

"That's because," said Miss Barrymore, calmly, "so many men are stupid while so few are blind."

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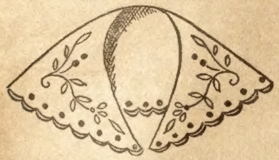
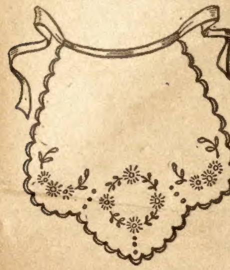
You are sure to find many articles that you want if you watch the Ledger each week, and it is so easy to get them, every woman should have little trouble in getting almost every one.

Canada—Single subscriptions, $1.50; Blade and Ledger, $3.00 the year.



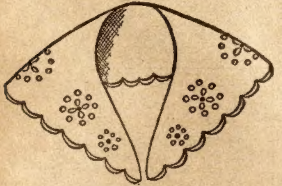
No. 141, Collar.

NO. 141, COLLAR.—This up-to-date collar design is for outline, solid and buttonhole embroidery. The design comes stamped on lawn or nainsook, and includes white embroidery cotton for working. This will be given free with a $1.00 year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.



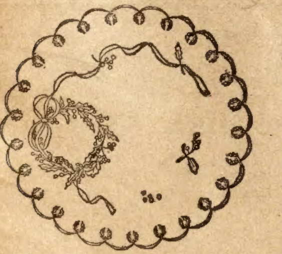
No. 143, Apron.

NO. 143, APRON.—This neat up-to-date design for an apron is for appenzel outline and eyelet embroidery. Same comes stamped on handkerchief linen, and includes six skeins of white embroidery cotton for working. This will be given free with a $1.00 subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.



No. 144, Collar.

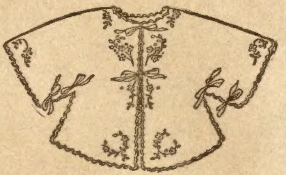
NO. 144, COLLAR.—This collar design is to be worked in eyelet, outline, and buttonhole embroidery, and comes stamped on handkerchief linen, including six skeins of white embroidery cotton for working. This will be sent free with a $1.00 subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.



No. 145, Centerpiece.

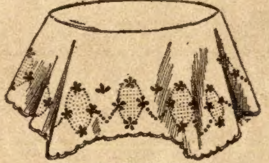
NO. 145, CENTERPIECE.—This beautiful centerpiece design is for buttonhole embroidery for the edge and eyelet and outline for the design itself. It comes stamped on pure white linen, size 22x22 inches, and includes six skeins white embroidery cotton for working. This will be sent free with a $1.00 subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.

NO. 146, BABY KIMONO.—This attractive but simple baby kimono design is for outline, eyelet and buttonhole embroidery. Same comes stamped on flannel, and includes six skeins white embroidery cotton for working. You can get this free by sending $2.00 for a year's subscription to the Blade and the Ledger.



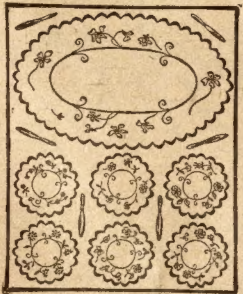
No. 146, Baby Kimono.

NO. 148, TABLE COVER.—This table cover design is for punch work embroidery, which is all the rage at the present time. The edge of this table cover is to be done in buttonhole embroidery. Same comes stamped on Irish linen (Union) and includes fifteen skeins of white embroidery cotton for working. Sent free with a $2.00 year's subscription to the Blade and the Ledger.



No. 148, Table Cover.

NO. 149, TABLE SET.—This beautiful set consists of one tray and six doilies to match, the whole stamped on pure white linen, 14x18 inches, and includes twelve skeins white embroidery cotton for working. Sent free for a $1.00 subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.



No. 149, Table Set.

* * *

Poor Yarn.

"Why don't you read that book Mrs. Dietz gave you on your birthday?" Mrs. Flubb asked her husband.

"I did read part of it, but I couldn't endure the rest of it."

"Well!" said Mrs. Flubb, aghast. "Every one is wild about it!"

"Perhaps. But it made no hit with me, just the same. Here are a man and a woman who find themselves—through no fault of their own, of course—each married to somebody else. The hero and heroine are never to blame for anything that happens.

"They are not even to blame for their lack of brains. They are strong on honor on one side and the biggest crooks you ever saw on the other.

"Yes, a beautiful story! The things that fellow says to that woman as they sit under the historic oaks while the moonlight steals over the castle walls! And after he has talked four pages of beautiful sentiment the lady takes her turn and goes him one better, and, in the meantime, where is her husband?

"Marrying the wrong people is as inevitable to book heroes as paying taxes. Why did I marry you? Because you looked as good to me as anything I could get in the market at the price which I could afford to pay. I didn't have to marry you.

"After the characters in books get married they fall in love—with somebody else. It is just as easy for them as getting caught in a rain. But falling in love in reality is hard work. I had the deuce of a time in falling in love with you, Mrs. Flubb. You have no idea how difficult it was.

"I know just about how you fell in love with me, too. You conjured up your imagination as hard as you could, and kept it busy steaming up for a year before you succeeded in getting the right amount of steam pressure.

"And here these two people in this story fell in love with each other because a turtle dove flew to its nest.

"What's that got to do with it?

"When you and I got ready to get married and began to figure on our flat and how much china we would need it was little we cared about the cuckoo calling to its mate!

"I have been married to you some time now, and nothing has happened. There has been no rare and radiant maiden suddenly bobbing up with no help on my part, to stand with me upon the rustic bridge which spans the river.

"What I like is a book that will make me laugh. This one is funny enough, goodness knows! But it doesn't provoke the kind of deep-chested noise that I like to make!"

* * *

Not Needed.

The old man who acts as postmaster in a small Southern town likewise keeps a general merchant's shop. He is often accused of reading the postcards that pass through his hands, but this he strongly denies. A lady called at the shop and ordered, among other goods, a ham and a cheese. Two days later the lady called again and asked why these two articles had not been sent with the other goods.

"Oh!" replied the merchant, calmly, "I saw by the postcard yo' got yistiday thet yo' friends wasn't comin', so I nachelly thought yo' wouldn't need them things."

* * *

One or the Other.

A noted physician the other day was called upon to examine the heart action of a college classmate's son.

"You've got tobacco heart, I guess," said the physician.

"But, doctor, I haven't"—protested the young man.

"Go 'way now; I'm busy."

Later on the father met the physician and told him that his boy hadn't smoked for four years.

"Well, then," said the physician, "the boy must be in love."

PATTERN COUPONS FREE!

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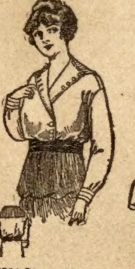
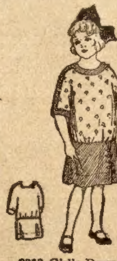
The great difficulty in making one's own garments is to get suitable patterns. Our women readers could make many pretty and useful things for themselves and their children if they could get well-made patterns. We have arranged to give our readers a pattern service unexcelled.

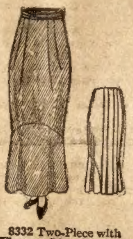
We make a splendid offer of the best and most fashionable patterns that can be produced by the greatest designers of New York and Paris, and what is more, these patterns will be within the reach of every one, and every one will have a wide selection to choose from. Read our splendid offer below.



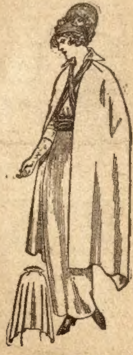
8310 Plain Blouse, 34 to 42 bust.



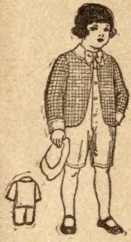
8313 Girl's Dress, 4 to 8 years.



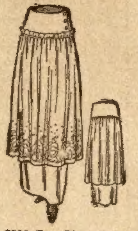
8332 Two-Piece with Flounce, 24 to 34 waist.



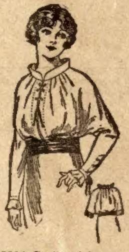
8339 Circular Cape, One Size.



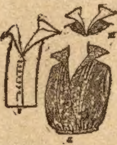
8315 Boy's Suit with Coat Effect, 4 and 6 years.



8312 Two-Piece Skirt, 22 to 30 waist.



8324 Gathered Blouse, 34 to 40 bust.



8335 Chemisette Guimpe and Collar, Small 34 or 36, Medium 38 or 40, Large 42 or 44 bust.

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Here is the way we will do it. To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of the Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc., so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These designs are made by the best designers and modists of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

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To get these five coupons entitling you to five patterns, fill out the blank below and enclose it with one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. Do this now—today! No woman should be without the Ledger's Pattern Coupon Book. Be among the thousands of women who will get these coupons.

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If you wish any pattern from those advertised in this issue, mark the number and size on the margin and we will retain a coupon for each pattern we send you when we send you the Coupon Book. (Order by size and number.) **Coupons good for six months.**

Poor Father!

"A man doesn't amount to much in comparison with a kid!" sighed Stormington. "The minute an infant arrives the infant is it, and the man is told to move on.

"Be he the Czar of Russia, the Shah of Persia or a Rajah in India, it is all the same. The man is nix and nil.

"Suppose he takes a notion to go in and see how his wife is getting along. Does he? I should say not!

"A woman in a white uniform heads him off in good shape and tells him to beat it. He is invited to go and smoke and to keep on smoking. No one pays any more attention to him than if he were a collector. He is in the way, and everybody is busy and hasn't time to fool with him.

"All kinds of things are going on which he cannot understand. There is hurrying hither and thither with all kinds of armfuls of things and there is haste and flurry and giggles and mirth, and the man isn't in on a darn thing.

"The lord and master of the household is like a puppy, willing enough and keenly interested and anxious to help, but thoroughly misunderstood and underrated. That's just what I have always felt like—a well meaning and insignificant dog. I have always expected any minute that some of those fussy women would take me by the nape of the neck and carry me out the back door and drop me in the woodshed and lock me up there. As it was, I have had only one room where I could walk around and smoke.

"We have had three babies in our house, and what do I amount to in comparison with them?

"The other afternoon I was out reading on the lawn where it is shady and cool and where the kids couldn't find me and use me as an exerciser. As I sat there, Nos. 1 and 2 were wheeling No. 3, the great mogul of them all.

"The mogul was being wheeled up and down, and if either kid stopped to take a rest they heard from headquarters right away. Mogul wanted to be kept going.

"As I watched the performance a kind old lady passed by, a kindly and inquisitive old lady. She saw mogul and paused to collect information.

"'Whose baby is this?' she inquired.

"'Ours,' responded Nos. 1 and 2.

"I had a notion of rising from my ambush and proclaiming myself modestly to the kindly lady, but the children settled the matter before I could appear. There was no call for the reserves, so I remained where I was.

"Then the old lady pointed to my historic mansion, that which I have labored hard to acquire all these years.

"'Whose house is this?' she asked.

"'Ours,' said the kids.

"'And who lives here?'

"'We do.'"

* * *

Equal Terms.

A young man of reactionary tendencies had proposed to a girl and she had accepted him. The young man then began, in his cautious, reactionary way, to question her, like this:

"I promised my mother, darling, that I would never marry a girl who was not a good housekeeper. Tell me, can you make pies?"

"Yes," the girl answered. "I took the cordon bleu course in Paris after my graduation from Vassar, and I can make all kinds of pies, even the genuine puff paste sort."

"Good!" he said. "And can you dressmake? I am not rich, you know."

"I understand dressmaking thoroughly," she answered. "In fact, M. Poiret, in whose atelier I studied, is ready to try me out as a subdesigner."

"You jewel! And can you——"

"Wait a minute," said the girl, coolly. "It's my turn, please. Let me now ask you a question. Do you know how to light a kitchen range, polish a hardwood floor and beat carpets?"

"The—er—the maids would do all that," said the young man.

"Can you sweep chimneys," she pursued, "clean silver——"

"I am not a domestic servant," he interrupted coldly.

The girl gave a loud, harsh laugh.

"Well, and neither am I," she said. "We seem to be marrying, however, with the idea of making domestic servants of each other, and I am so much superior in the business that I don't think such a match would be fair to me. Go and learn your trade, if you care to—butler or valet—so that you can talk to me on equal terms. Till then—good afternoon."

* * *

The Short Way.

A certain teacher explained to her pupils the use of ditto marks. It so happens that one of the daily tasks in that room is the writing of each word of the spelling lesson five times. Next day one of her boys showed up with each word written once and four ditto marks under it, and he gravely passed his sample of high-speed writing in with the others. Then followed an explanation that some very useful expedients are sometimes out of place. He had not yet learned the lesson that nothing is so good that it is good all the time.

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We Want to Prove at Our Own Expense That It Is No Longer Necessary to Be Thin, Scrawny and Undeveloped

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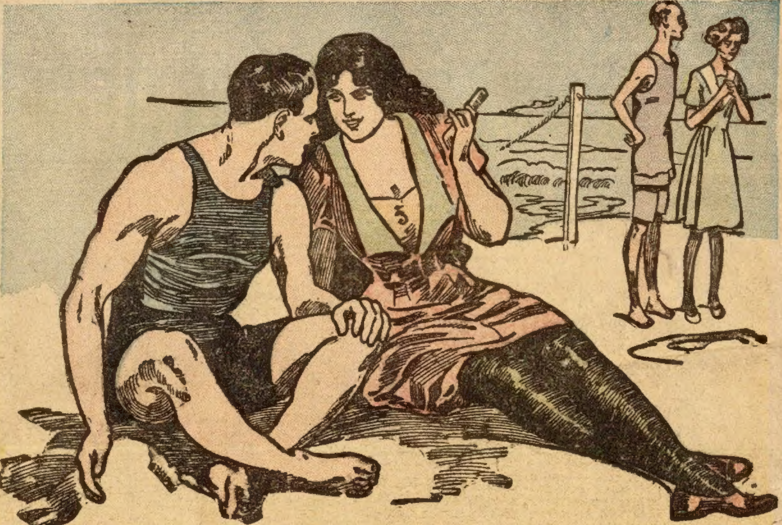

"Gee! Look at that pair of skinny scarecrows! Why don't they try Sargol?"

This is a generous offer to every thin man or woman reader. We positively guarantee to increase your weight to your own satisfaction or no pay. Think this over—think what it means. At our own risk, we offer to put 10, 15, yes, 30 pounds of good, solid "stay there" flesh on your bones, to fill out hollows in cheeks, neck or bust, to get rid of that "peaked" look, to rejuvenate and revitalize your whole body until it tingles with vibrant energy; to do this without drastic diet "tonics," severe physical culture "stunts," detention from business or any irksome requirements—if we fail it costs you nothing.

We particularly wish to hear from the excessively thin, those who know the humiliation and embarrassment which only skinny people have to suffer in silence. We want to send a free 50-cent package of our new discovery to the people who are called "slats" and "bean poles," to bony women, whose clothes never look "anyhow," no matter how expensively dressed, to the skinny men who fail to gain social or business recognition on account of their starved appearance. We care not whether you have been thin from birth, whether you have lost flesh through sickness, how many flesh builders you have experimented with. We take the risk and assume it cheerfully. If we cannot put pounds and pounds of healthy flesh on your frame we don't want your money.

How can we do this? We will tell you. We have discovered a remarkable concentrated treatment for increasing cell growth, the very substance of which our bodies are made—a treatment to make indigestion and other stomach troubles disappear as if by magic and an old dyspeptic or a sufferer from weak nerves or lack of vitality feel like a 2-year-old. This new treatment which has proved such a boon to thin persons is called **Sargol.** Don't forget the name **"S-A-R-G-O-L."** Nothing like it has ever been produced before. It is a revelation to women who have never been able to appear stylish in anything they wore because of their thinness. It is a godsend to men who are under weight or lacking in nerve force or energy. If you want a beautiful and well-rounded figure of symmetrical proportions, of which you can feel justly proud—if you want a body full of throbbing life and energy write The Sargol Company, 100-W Herald Building, Binghamton, N. Y., to-day, and we will send you absolutely free, a 50c box of Sargol to prove all we claim. Take one with every meal, and in five minutes after you take the first concentrated tablet of this precious product see how it commences to unfold its virtues. It has by actual demonstration often increased the weight at the rate of one pound a day. But you say you want proof. Well, here you are. Here is the statement of those who have tried—who have been convinced—and who have testified to the virtues of this marvelous preparation.

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When we mail you the Free 50-cent package of Sargol, we will send you copies of letters received from grateful patrons, reporting actual gains in solid, healthy, permanent flesh, of from ten to over thirty pounds.

We give here a few interesting figures from reports which are being received daily:

REV. GEORGE W. DAVIS says:

"I have made a faithful trial of the Sargol treatment and must say it has brought to me new life and vigor. I have gained twenty pounds and now weigh 170 pounds, and what is better, I have gained the days of my boyhood. It has been the turning point of my life. My health is now fine. I don't have to take any medicine at all and never want to again."

MRS. A. I. RODENHEISER writes:

"I have gained immensely since I took Sargol, for I only weighed about 106 pounds when I began using it and now I weigh 130 pounds, so really this means 24 pounds. I feel stronger and now I carry rosy cheeks, which is something I could never say before.

"My old friends who have been used to seeing me with a thin, long face, say that I am looking better than they have ever seen me before, and father and mother are so well pleased to think I have got to look so well and weigh so heavy for me."

F. GAGNON writes:

"Here is my report since taking the Sargol treatment. I am a man 67 years of age and was all run down to the very bottom. I had to quit work as I was so weak. Now, thanks to Sargol, I look like a new man. I gained 22 pounds with 26 days' treatment. I cannot tell you how happy I feel. All my clothes are getting too tight. My face has a good color and I never was so happy in my life."

C. E. Crouner	**reports**	**gain**	**15**	**lbs.**	**in**	**30**	**days**
Thomas Davis	"	"	**10**	"	"	**16**	"
Leonore Patten	"	"	**16**	"	"	**30**	"
Mrs. Seim	"	"	**13**	"	"	**20**	"
Mrs. A. Arnott	"	"	**10**	"	"	**40**	"
F. A. Myrick	"	"	**20**	"	"	**30**	"
Philip Drapeau	"	"	**9**	"	"	**30**	"
Mrs. S. E. Murray	"	"	**30**	"	"	**40**	"
Mary Bland	"	"	**18**	"	"	**40**	"
W. W. Allis	"	"	**36**	"	"	**50**	"
Wm. Carmichael	"	"	**5**	"	"	**10**	"
Arthur Stewart	"	"	**5**	"	"	**12**	"
Mrs. C. Craig	"	"	**13**	"	"	**30**	"
Mrs. N. Galliger	"	"	**18**	"	"	**35**	"

Send to-day for our free 50-cent package and let us prove that

Sargol Should Do the Same for You

This treatment is used to increase the red corpuscles in the blood, strengthen the nerves and put the digestive tract into such shape that your food is assimilated and turned into good, solid, healthy flesh instead of passing through the system undigested and unassimilated. It is a thoroughly scientific principle, this Sargol, and builds up the thin, weak and debilitated, without any nauseous dosing. In many conditions it is better than cod liver oil, and certainly is much pleasanter to take.

Send for the 50-cent box today. Convince us by your prompt acceptance of this offer that you are writing in good faith and really desire to gain in weight. The 50-cent package which we will send you free will be an eye-opener to you. We send it that you may see the simple, harmless nature of our new discovery, how easy it is to take, how you gain flesh privately without the knowledge of friends or family until you astonish them by the prompt and unmistakable results.

We could not publish this offer if we were not prepared to live up to it. It is only the astounding results of our new method of treatment that make such an offer and such a guarantee possible on our part. So cut off the coupon to-day and mail it at once to The Sargol Company, 100-W Herald Bldg., Binghamton, N. Y., and please inclose 10c. with your letter to help pay distribution expenses. Take our word, you'll never regret it.

FREE COUPON

Come Eat with Us at Our Expense.

This coupon entitles any thin person to one 50c package of Sargol, the concentrated Flesh Builder (provided you have never tried it), and that 10c. is enclosed to cover postage, packing, etc. Read our advertisement printed above, and then put 10c. in stamps in letter to-day with this coupon and the full 50c. package will be sent to you by return post. Address: The Sargol Company, 100-W Herald Bldg., Binghamton, N. Y. Write your name and address plainly, and

Pin This Coupon to Your Letter.